

# AMERICA

A CATHOLIC REVIEW OF THE WEEK

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APRIL 23, 1938

## GREETINGS

THE EDUCATORS, assembled in their annual convention in Milwaukee, are our special audience for this issue. Next to the official teaching body of the Church, they form the most important intellectual and spiritual influence. To them, and to the tens of thousands lay and clerical teachers whom they represent, AMERICA sends most cordial wishes. . . . GEORGE BULL, S.J., in former years was a frequent contributor to these pages. His article this week is his first in the latest era, and contains something of a challenge in higher education. It reinforces some of the points made by Professor Pegis who, in the *Correspondence*, answers his foremost critic, Father Beglan. . . . SISTER MARY JUSTINE, S.C.N., has our sympathy. It may be that those engaged in dealing with the young sprouts may differ from her, and may say a good word for the poor parents. . . . DAN W. GILBERT, young Protestant author of books and numerous articles, located at San Diego, California, speaks his message about an American educational system that, miserably, is held so sacrosanct. . . . DAVID GORDON should be well known to our readers. One feels that he has a tender sympathy with his execrable poets. . . . JOHN A. TOOMEY, after tremendous labor and after many consultations with the judges, has reached his conclusions about March Bias. To make selection from the piles of virulence and ignorance submitted was a frightful task. Much shuffling and re-shuffling was transacted before the awards were finally and definitely made. Another survey-article on Bias will follow.

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# COMMENT

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WARNING is hereby issued against the most insidious propagandist yet forwarded to the United States by the so-called Loyalist Government of Barcelona. There have been two or three others, but they were inept. Señor José Bergamin, in the subtlety of his approach and in the magnitude of his mendacity, is likely to deceive many Catholics. He tours the United States under the auspices of Leftist and Communist organizations. He uses a recommendation from a New York priest that the priest repudiates. This bogus sponsorship may open many Catholic avenues to him in various parts of the country. It has already been used to woo New York Catholics to the anti-Catholic Barcelona regime. Some of the facts about Señor Bergamin were sent out through the N.C.W.C. News Service, and are being currently printed in the diocesan papers. In addition, it may be said that he belongs to the very small group, at present, of Spanish radical intellectuals. According to Señor Marañón, the father of the Spanish Republic, these exponents of a doubtful Catholicism are "a curious outcropping of today's ideological fauna" (*Revue de Paris*, December 15, 1937). It is to be doubted that he ever was an orthodox Catholic, and doubted also that he conforms to the usual Catholic duties. A recent poem, *Romance del mulo Mola*, circulated in the United States by Communist sources, contains, among other lines, the following:

The Hammers and the Sickles  
Oppose their clear truths  
Against the wild stories  
The Fascists tell to you.

The enormity of the falsehoods enunciated by Señor Bergamin may be found in the release issued in Washington on April 11, and carried in many of the metropolitan newspapers.

THE AMERICA Spanish Relief Fund offers the colleges, high schools and grade schools throughout the United States an opportunity to help the child and non-combatant victims of the civil war in Spain. The America Spanish Relief Fund is registered with the State Department, Washington, D. C., as a collecting agency for Spain, and is empowered to forward all contributions to Cardinal Gomá, Primate of All Spain, for distribution. Notre Dame, Fordham, St. Peter's, New Rochelle and a dozen other colleges have been generous in their activities and contributions. Many high schools have taken up collections among the students and their friends. A complete listing of all the schools of all the country which have come to the aid of Spain's helpless is being drawn up, and will be sent to Cardinal Gomá. The directors of the America Spanish Relief Fund earnestly urge all the educators and educatees to take up Spanish collections,

to agitate the true facts about the Spanish situation, and to pray for Spain. It is their hope that the prayer to Our Lady of Pilar (available in leaflet form, in any quantity from the America Spanish Relief Fund, 342 Madison Ave., N. Y.) may be recited in every school, every day.

A COUNTER-DEMONSTRATION for Catholic colleges on April 27 is being urged by the students of Georgetown University, Washington, D. C. On that date, the American Student Union (confer AMERICA, May 15, 1937, page 126) is holding rallies in colleges and high schools in order to propagandize Communist pacifism. The Catholic student, under the present Communist leadership of the American Student Union, can take no part in such rallies and meetings, except that of violent protest. And yet, the Catholic collegian is solidly and soundly pacifist. In order to emphasize the Catholic position, we would urge that our colleges and high schools seize upon the peace-day and make a militant display of the true type of American and Catholic pacifism.

EDMUND WILSON, never unsympathetic to things Soviet, writing in the *New Republic*, expresses serious forebodings of the future of Stalinism. He admits that the U.S.S.R. has evolved a system of government by political bosses, wherein the proletariat is subjected to an industrial and financial exploitation by a clique of clever master-minds. He further admits that the Stalinist administration has become definitely reactionary and corrupt. But what he adds about the rising power of the GPU in the Soviet is something new. Mr. Wilson is surprised that there has been so little editorial comment on this new turn of events. There was quite a demonstration at the Bolshoi theatre to commemorate the founding of the secret police, and the occasion was marked by the execution of eight officials, numbering some distinguished older Bolsheviks. Yezhov, who has supplanted Yagoda as head of the secret police, is fast usurping the place on the front page hitherto held sacred for Joseph Stalin. This would explain, as a defensive measure, the spotlighting of Stalin recently on any public occasion or ceremony, contrary to the latter's former precedent.

PASSION for liberty, whether political or economic, has fairly absorbed the national consciousness. Economic security, in a collision of rights that should not and need not exist, is made subordinate to political freedom. This topsy-turvy philosophy is bound to produce baneful results on a people



more given to popular catch-words and slogans than to independent thought. The proper end and perspective of our schemes for the liberation of the spirit are lost in cul-de-sac formulas of liberty. Monsignor Fulton J. Sheen recently called attention to our national weakness and danger, in his appeal for the primacy of truth. The real dynamic of the human race is not freedom but truth; man's real liberation comes from the knowledge of his purpose and destiny. Our schemes for social and economic betterment must prove elusive, unless founded on social justice, hence on truth. Our schemes for international cooperation will be frustrated until, in the pregnant words of the Psalmist, "Justice and peace have kissed." As Monsignor Sheen said, our indifference to truth has so developed that there are very few ideals for which a man would die or make a sacrifice. The doctrine of hatred is preached with greater power because we have lost our passion for truth.

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THE COMMONWEAL underwent its first major change in fourteen years when three of the younger group succeeded Michael Williams and the pioneers. The issue of April 15 introduces the Commonweal Publishing Company and bids farewell to the Calvert Associates. To Messrs. Burnham, Skillin and Binsse, to their distinguished contributing editors, to the *Commonweal* in its total orbit, the editors of AMERICA wish success and offer comradeship in the campaign for the glory of God and the strength of the Church and the United States. There is need now, as there was need in 1924, for a vigorous, intelligent and sound journal of opinion under the auspices of Catholic laymen. Michael Williams and his associate editors deserved well of the Church for their sincere endeavors; occasionally they raised storms of protest and occasionally this Review felt obliged to differ; be it said in balance, AMERICA, also, was clamored against occasionally, with occasional criticism by the *Commonweal*. Such differences, when not too fundamental, are healthy, and we trust that the friendship between the two foremost Catholic weeklies may be such that they may be free to speak frankly one of the other. May the wisdom of the Holy Spirit be upon the new editors of the *Commonweal* and of AMERICA so that, together, they may be stalwart champions of the truth in the turmoil of these times.

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"LET us make no mistake. Totalitarianism is a real threat to our institutions. More and more people are coming to recognize the danger even to America of this ruthless political monster that hunts by day and prowls by night." So it is, Mr. Ickes, if you keep your hearers on the plane of realism. If you only include all the forms of totalitarianism, Nazism, Fascism, the collectivists of Russia masking under a so-called dictatorship of the proletariat. Mr. Ickes should not be so naïve as to think that our country will be suddenly overtaken by a foreign totalitarian wave. He is doing a poor service to his country and the interests he champions by

ridiculing the bogey of an existent or potential dictatorship emerging within the government. But it is confusing the issue and muddling the American public to speak of the "barely imaginary danger of Communism while Fascism thunders at the gates of our citadel of liberty." Any encroachment on our constitutional liberties and democratic processes is our enemy and it will not help our preparedness by ballyhooing Fascism, while crying down the danger from Communism. Listening to the Secretary of the Interior, one would be led to believe that there is an international Fascism. That is the pretence of international Communism, but Mr. Ickes should be careful not to become its unwitting mouthpiece. Raising the cry and flag of Fascism to reprove opponents of the Administration, within their constitutional rights of freedom of political expression, will not help Americans to stand in solid phalanx, as Mr. Ickes desires, against the real enemy. And if Mr. Ickes does not think Soviet Russia is swashbuckling nationalistic, we commend to his attention an article, *Prisoners of the Soviet*, in the *March American Mercury*.

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LETTING down a smoke screen of international politics to cover our domestic problems would be very dangerous, yet seems not beyond the realms of actuality. Shrewd observers of the doings at Washington have called attention to such barrages. Collective security along parallel lines, the fight of the democracies for preservation against dictators and such like noble projects, are worse than useless if they blind our people to their own true interests and real dangers. The first official pronouncement of Ambassador Joseph P. Kennedy in London that the United States would not be pre-entangled in foreign troubles but would act independently and with a view to her own true interests whenever action was deemed necessary, was sensible. It does not sound so noble and generous as the platitudes; it is much saner. Would that the foreign policy of Washington gave more hope of its actualization. "Democracies are bleeding inwardly. The healing is not to be found in armaments but in bringing contentment, happiness and prosperity to the harried, confused and discouraged citizen." Thus spoke Senator Borah in a recent radio broadcast, and went on to say: "There is greater danger to our democracy in that vast army of unemployed . . . than in any fleet of battleships which any nation or group of nations may choose to send against us. These are the things that make for Communism and Fascism, which wage war against every democracy."

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A DISTRESSING error, innocently perpetrated by the printer, occurred in the advertisement for *Heart to Heart* in our last issue. About 5,000 copies were mailed before we discovered the "howler." We beg the seminarians and religious who happen to receive these copies not to accept, on our authority, the recommendation of the printer who omitted two tiny words, and made amazing sense.

# PUBLIC EDUCATION: DESPOTS OR BUREAUCRATS?

The American child is the victim of a bad system

DAN W. GILBERT

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WITH federal control of state education looming large on the horizon of the future, it is well to consider the question: who *now* controls state-supported educational institutions? Theoretically, no one. According to the prevailing principle of "academic freedom," our tax-supported schools are without control, direction, or outside interference of any kind. They are laws unto themselves.

Of course, this policy of un-control is not applied outside the class room itself. The conduct of the public school's cafeteria is under the control of the public health authorities. The provision of fire-escape facilities may be enforced by the city fire department. The installation of sanitary drinking fountains may be compelled by city ordinance. The heating and ventilating apparatus may be subject to strict public control. The physical welfare and safety of pupils is a matter of public concern.

But once the child is comfortably and safely seated at a public-school desk, what happens to him—short of physical violence—is no one's business, subject to the control of no public agency which represents the will of the people themselves. It is up to the pedagogs to decide what ideas, theories, values, philosophies, fallacies, truths, or half-truths shall be indoctrinated or imposed on students. The instructors, according to the sacrosanct principle of academic freedom, are free to teach communism, atheism, unconventional morality, or any other doctrine which suits their fancy. The tax-paying public has no right, according to the "progressive" educators, to place state-paid teachers under the exceedingly mild "control" which, often ineffectually, is applied to governors, senators, judges and other, sometimes miscalled, "public servants." I refer, of course, to the simple requirement of an oath of allegiance to the Constitution.

Now, impending, or at least threatening, federal control of state education has two separate and definite aspects. The first one is the easiest to visualize and, perhaps, the most discussed. It involves the "muscling in" of federal bureaucrats on the narrowing domain now reserved to school-board politicians and the people of the various communities themselves. With the Federal Government advancing funds to the public schools of the local community, we may expect persons with real or

imagined "Washington influence" to exert some control over the location and extent of new school buildings, the hiring and firing of janitors, the letting of milk contracts, the purchase of athletic equipment, etc. It is not, however, a matter of overwhelming concern whether federal or local politicians control such matters.

The question of real importance, in connection with the apparent approach of a form of federal control, is: does federal subsidizing of state schools mean a change from the bad to the worse, a change from educational uncontrol to educational regimentation, a shift from academic anarchy to academic censorship? I think the answer must be *yes!* The pedagogical protagonists of academic freedom, carried to the point of anarchy, do not seem to realize that, in greedily reaching out for federal funds, they are inviting the imposition of federal fetters. The pedagogs have, in most States, preserved academic license against the just demands of the Christian citizenry aroused by the teaching of atheism to their children.

But academic freedom will be under fire from a different direction, once federal subsidies provide pretext for bureaucratic regimentation of education. No Washington bureaucracy has ever yet extended financial "hand-outs" without attaching "strings" to them. No group of Americans, no sectional or professional element, has ever yet fallen heir to the beneficence of federal bureaucracy, without at the same time falling under its bondage.

Much as we may plead and pray for release from the prevailing system of academic anarchy, for the imposition of reasonable control upon public-school teachers which will prevent a pernicious minority from atheizing and paganizing students, we would be blind if we imagined any good would come from federal control. The kind of regulation which would be imposed by the national authorities would add new evils to those already existing in our state-school system.

It is folly to suppose that federal regulators would do anything to stop the teaching of atheism and paganism in state schools. This would continue unabated, perhaps even accelerated. The advent of federal control would simply mean that authorized brands of political propaganda would be taught by



mandate, while the inculcation of immoralism, atheism, free-love sociology, Freudian psychology, and materialism generally, would remain optional with the pedagogs. In other words, control would be imposed where it is not required and not desired; it would not be invoked to curb existing abuses resulting from un-control.

Throughout this discussion, I have assumed almost without argument that federal control of education is, in the long run, inevitable. I think that this is a perfectly valid assumption. Federal control is not inevitable because federal subsidies are impending; but, rather, the reverse is true. One need not, and I do not, impugn the sincerity of the statement of any particular committee or educator, or political agency working for federal financing of education. But federal control of education, and exploitation of it as an agency of propaganda, will remain the dream and aim of all dictator-minded demagogues, regardless of how the present drive, or any subsequent campaign, for federal subsidies may be dealt with by this, or any subsequent, Congress.

The notorious success that certain communist, atheist, and free-love advocating professors have enjoyed in using their state-university lecture rooms as radical recruiting stations stands as an enduring challenge and object lesson to all seekers after dictatorial political power. By consolidating control over our vast state-school systems, the way would be cleared for a complete dictatorship over the mind and soul of a nation.

Thus, it seems increasingly likely that the public school—intended as a safeguard of democracy—will ultimately be the instrument of democracy's destruction. The lengthening to an average minimum of twelve years of the time the average child spends in school, the undermining of home life and of parental influence and control, the deliberate sabotage by the state of the Church's rightful influence over children born and reared in the Faith—all these factors have tended to concentrate tyrannical power in public-school educators.

Today, the public school is a dominating, tyrannical force in the training of American youth—an arbiter of our nation's future against which home and Church, alike, can raise but ineffectual protest. The overwhelming majority of the citizenry of tomorrow are public-school products. Let all forty-eight State school systems be put under a central control, and power to mould the life and thought of the overwhelming part of the rising generation passes into the hands of a bureaucratic federal agency.

For over half of the youth of the land to be under the control of any one educational system is incompatible with the very existence of democracy. Educational monopoly is far more deadly to democracy than is economic monopoly. Its existence is an enduring threat to a free people.

Even without federal control, a growing standardization of state-school systems, an increasing tendency throughout all of the forty-eight States to follow the educational leadership of a few dominant theorists centered in the Teachers' College of

Columbia University and other nationally famous institutions, the tyranny of highly publicized educational fads and faddists, the effective regimentation enforced by certain of the teachers' organizations—all these trends point toward centralizing control over more and more school children in the hands of fewer and fewer pedagogical theorists.

Let us suppose that, day after tomorrow, Dr. John Dewey would announce a new, revolutionary theory or method of educational procedure. How many American school children would be involved in carrying out the experiment, say, within a year? Five million? Twenty million? Perhaps, there is no way of knowing; but we can be sure that the number is large, and growing. Rural schools lag behind in following the latest educational fads; but, increasingly the state-school systems are being organized to accept in unison the latest pedagogical theory to come out of one of the recognized ideological laboratories.

We seem to be hastening toward the day when a little coterie of theoretical professors will have the majority of the youth of the country in the hollow of their hands, to be moulded as they see fit; to be atheized, communized, paganized, stultified, or stupefied, at their will and command, obediently enforced by thousands of public-school teachers throughout the nation who have been reduced to mere cogs in a pedagogical propaganda machine.

Democracy must protect itself against an undue concentration of power, whether it be found in the monopolizing of political control, economic control, or educational control. It is intolerable that the lives of half of all American workers should be controlled by one corporation; such a condition would call forth immediate correction by an aroused citizenry. It is equally intolerable that the mental, moral and spiritual life of more than half of all American youths, over half of all tomorrow's citizenry, should be under the control of one pedagogical brain trust, one educational syndicate or system.

To safeguard its own existence, democracy must break the stampede toward educational monopoly, a process shortsightedly set in motion by an unfair and undemocratic system of what amounts to punitive taxation levied against all parents patronizing non-public schools. Democracy will not be safe in America until somewhere near fifty per cent of her school children are *outside* the controlling influence of a standardized school system.

The abolition of the prevailing system of "double" taxation, a fair deal for Christian parents, would do much to reverse the trend toward intellectual regimentation in America. Instead of fatuously "resisting" dictatorship with such weapons as rubber hose and hot air, all Americans, regardless of creed, should join in an intelligent attack upon the root of the subversive threat in America—a paganized state educational system which remains impregnably entrenched by the exercise of the tyranny of punitive taxation over all parents who avail themselves of the now nullified constitutional right freely to send their children to Christian educational institutions.

# ST. JOHN'S EXPERIMENT TO RECLAIM A LOST HERITAGE

The practical educator may view the program with alarm

GEORGE BULL, S.J.

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THOUGH not a Catholic college St. John's College at Annapolis has embarked on a project which, as it develops, will be watched by many a Catholic educator with wistfulness if not with envy. For this institution, smaller than many a Catholic college in the land, has in its new program cast out the whole befuddled apparatus of American higher learning. It has outlawed credit hours and semester points and, in general, education by the yardstick. It has broken through departmentalism, laughed electivism out of court and, in spite of a depression peculiarly acute for itself, it has elected to train students to live rather than to earn a living. It has, in a word, deliberately chosen to turn out students interested in the things of the mind for their own sake and not for something which the possession of these things may bring in its train.

An account of the actual working of the plan, of the principles which vivify it and of its general objectives, as given by Professor Scott Buchanan (*A Crisis in Liberal Education*, Amherst *Graduates' Quarterly*, February, 1938) reveals these amazing data:

Twenty students have joined the new program class. About a third of these are old students from the upper classes who have decided to start all over again for the four-year course. Fourteen in the new program are Freshmen. In three months they have read the following books: Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey*; Aeschylus' *Agamemnon*, *Libation Bearers* and *Eumenides*; Sophocles' *Oedipus Rex*; Euripides' *Hedea* and *Electra*; Herodotus' *History*; ten dialogues of Plato; five books of Euclid's elements. The books have been discussed as they have been read in weekly and semi-weekly seminars, there have been lectures on Plato's dialogues, and there have been regular five-hour-a-week classes in Euclid. In addition, two-thirds of the class can now read Greek with the help of a dictionary, having spent five hours a week in memorizing paradigms and passages of Greek prose and poetry from the books and studying the basic grammatical constructions. . . .

In the next three years and one half, these students will have read over one hundred great books comparing in range and depth with those already read. They will cover the whole array of European thought in both subject matter and in time. They will have a working knowledge of four languages, Greek, Latin, French and German.

Elements of the program such as these may well make many a Catholic educator nostalgic. With

certain grave and fundamental reservations, the plan embodies an ideal of education which is indigenous to Catholicism. Its objective is the human being as a human being and not as an economic unit or as an atom in the social mechanism. It denies the principle of the equivalence of subjects, offspring of electivism, and asserts that there is permanent and perennial content to education. It rejects the spirit of the pursuit of truth and brings back once more the ideal of the contemplation of truth. It assumes that truth was made for man and not for a monster called "Research." It believes in the past and not merely in the future, and it believes in the tradition of the West.

But perhaps its clearest break with the contemporary *milieu* is made when it dares to propose education as a discipline:

We associate the term (discipline) with the soldier. Discipline had a genuine meaning as long as the soldier had to have courage and obedience. Its meaning began to slip when all he needed was a set of drill reflexes and a machine gun. . . . In an older usage, discipline was associated with habits and habits were associated with any human function.

As Professor Buchanan goes on to describe the means taken to make this discipline concrete, there is more than an echo of the psychology assumed by the *Ratio Studiorum*. There is a return, he tells us, "to memory as a device for learning languages." Imagination, which in the modern is "notoriously weak and spastic," is to be enabled and supported by memory used on larger units of imaginative material, long passages of prose, etc. "We are not ashamed to admit that we drill our students and they are not always averse to admitting that they respect and like it."

This, in a word, is the return to a humane as opposed to an animal psychology of education. Man has faculties. Imagination, memory, intellect are capable of training and it is the business of education to train them. There is obedience to the general idea of discipline—and specifically to discipline through the liberal arts. There is a frank return to the adage: "Knowledge maketh a bloody entrance." And "progressive education" is re-defined so that one word in the phrase no longer cancels out the other. A man progresses in education as he ad-



vances into closer contact and deeper sympathy with the heritage of the West.

But consolatory as all this is for the Catholic educator, he will, I think, in the concrete circumstances of our day, find his deepest satisfaction in this: that the thing has been undertaken at all! Struggling of late years not to sell his birthright for a mess of President Eliot's pottage, he has found, at times, that his enemies are those of his own household. "Practical men" (like the poor) we have always with us. And these gentry have been telling us that in a world of vocationalism, liberal education cannot be retained. The modern student, they say, is incapable of things like "memory-lines" and drill. He will not learn languages by paradigm; but only by sugar-coated *First-Books*. Above all, the modern student cannot be expected to read books—unless the professor has first shredded them into summaries, outlines and "notes." Or, varying the tune, we are told that standardizing agencies will not tolerate a "Medieval Curriculum." Or, finally, that the student must be able when he leaves us, to get a job.

On premises such as these, they have assumed that our primary task is to get students into Catholic colleges, and that what we do with them when we get them there is a matter of secondary concern. They call upon the ultimate objectives of all Catholic life, the glory of God and the salvation of souls, and attempt to make this do duty as the immediate and specific object of education. They have forgotten that the end of education, as such, is specific and distinct from the end of missionary activity; that to confound the ultimate end of both with the formal and immediate object of each, is to introduce disorder into the whole Catholic scheme.

They forget that we cannot undertake to save all the souls whom we engage to save, by putting them in college; that we should not induce students to come to college *merely* that their souls may be saved; that if we destroy the function proper to education, or confuse it with the immediate purpose of missions and retreats, we inevitably close up one avenue by which souls *may* be saved; that for *some souls* we close up perhaps the only avenue by which in the ordinary providence of God, *their souls* are most likely to be saved.

The consolation, therefore, which the Catholic educator may derive from the venture at St. John's, is precisely in the retort it makes to defeatists in the Catholic ranks. What has been done, can be done. And the point is the sharper, because St. John's is not a richly endowed institution; at the moment of its financial distress, it turned its poverty into the greatest wealth a college, as such, can possess. It has challenged the assumption that standardizing agencies will insist on yardstick education; for it introduced the new program precisely when St. John's had lost its rating with the Middle States Association of Colleges. It has given the lie to the assumption that the modern student cannot if he will, and will not if he can, read great books and not merely textbooks; that he is incapable of discipline; that he cannot be brought to love the

things of the mind for their own sake. In a word to the "practical man" the program makes the most crushing of all retorts: *solvitur ambulando*.

Yet there is one aspect of the project with which no Catholic educator can agree. And the disagreement is fundamental and inevitable, because it is cultural. Happy as we are to find a bold attempt being made to recover for education a belief in man, we find in it (as find we must, being what we are) a truncated concept of human nature as it has historically appeared. The *Anima Christiana* as a phenomenon of the history of the West, is too present to us ever to be left out of consideration in any system of education which purports to embody that tradition.

This difference is too often dismissed as one exclusively of religion. But Catholicism is not merely a creed. It is a culture. And that culture gives to the tradition of the West an incandescence peculiarly its own. For us humane letters must glow and gleam in ways to which other eyes will be blind. Not in Greece and Rome do we find the fulfilment of the highest perfections of which human nature has been capable; but in Greece and Rome as completed and, in consequence, purged. As Catholics, we cannot but hold that human nature as it ultimately embodied itself in the arts of the West, showed capacities infinitely beyond the mere *this-worldliness* of Greece. Nor can we believe that the highest point of human intellect was reached in that eclipse of the certainties which occurred when earth came between man and heaven in the form of the three R's of the new culture. Renaissance, Reformation and Revolution have left their mark on the mind of the modern man not less than on his institutions; not less on his "literature of power" (as DeQuincey calls it) than on his "literature of fact."

If then the "Great Books of the European Tradition" are proposed as the primary tools of an education, we can agree. And we shall be at one, not only with the aim but with the execution of the plan, if we can also agree on where the peak of that tradition is.

Now, difficult as it is to say so, in the face of so magnificent an attempt to reclaim a lost educational heritage, I can find in the list of great books, by which the plan is to be actualized, no evidence of a peak from which all the striving of the human spirit through the ages of the West, is to be viewed. Calvin, I cannot rate, as painting human nature even within the same general frame as Bonaventure or Aquinas; nor Ibsen, as seeing life steadily and seeing it whole—if this is to be said of Shakespeare. If Rousseau belongs to the genuine tradition of the West, then Sophocles does not. If Marx is mirroring man, the *New Testament* portrays only a chimera. Rabelais, if included in the list, must surely rob Dante of any place or value. Freud, as an example of the "liberal arts" is incomprehensible in a catalogue which though including Cicero omits Longinus. If Hobbes' *Leviathan* is a "great book," surely St. Augustine's *City of God* is not.

Antinomies such as these are examples of the fact that a principle of discrimination must be at

hand before a list can be made at all. The Leveller attitude is worse than useless where the facts demand a hierarchy. The very use of the phrase "great books" implies a standard, a point of reference, a peak. And that peak, where there is question of a liberal education, is *ex hypothesi*, human nature at its loftiest achievement. It must be that aerie over which Wisdom presides. And Wisdom surely cannot hover over both the portrayals of human nature implicit in these antinomies. The tradition of the West is either that of Aristotle and Saint Thomas, or that of the culture which prided itself on being new.

It is at this point that we come upon a fundamental parting of the ways: between liberal education as conceived from the Catholic point of view, and liberal education as conceived by those who do not accept that outlook. We are sure that we know where Wisdom resides. We have a fixed point of reference. It is taken for granted before we begin the business of educating at all. The highest achievement of human nature is cleanly chiseled for us in the fact of the Incarnation; in the Incarnation and all that it has meant for the thinking and feeling of men in the West. If humanism in education is our goal, here, we feel, we have it in its plenitude. In the light of the *Great Fact* we know how antinomies such as those I have mentioned are to be resolved.

"Great books" will have many marks. But this, at least, they must all possess: that they do not mirror human nature with distortion. Not all the books of the West belong to the tradition of the West. And only books which embody that tradition should be the *formative* sources of liberal education. I do not say that no other books can have a place in an educational scheme, but only that they may not be read in the function of "great books." They should be read merely as phenomena of the thinking and feeling of man when he was under the aegis of something less than the Wisdom of the West; or as illustrating what man could make of man, when man's art and intellect came down from the heights.

All this may seem a hard saying to the earnest and great men who sponsor the program at St. John's. But it may have the merit of directing their attention to an aura which, for Catholics at least, seems to surround their venture. Knowing what they intend, I should hesitate to say that in spite of their purposes, "scientism" was showing its ugly head in the *execution* of a program so loftily conceived. But in the absence of a clearly marked peak where human nature at its best is to be found, in the apparent disinterestedness, the egalitarianism, with which books of different traditions are admitted, I seem to see something of the mere scientism to whom a fact is a fact.

It is as though Aristotle, Dante or Saint Thomas, Kant and Locke, and Hume, or Voltaire or Freud were there merely as phenomena and as nothing else. I know that this is not the basis on which they have been *ex professo* chosen; that they are there because, amongst other things, "they raise the persistent unanswerable questions about the great

themes in European thought." But where among them does Wisdom reside by which the student may judge their qualitative difference as to human nature in its permanent and true relations? Has the tradition of the West not as yet achieved Wisdom? Is "progress" even here the spirit brooding over the formation of youth? Are not "progress" and Wisdom the root antinomies? Is it not the business of mere science to pursue, and of wisdom to contemplate? And is it not the business of education to instil wisdom—that man may be enabled to see life steadily and to see it whole?

These are questions which as Catholics we must raise. If it seem less than gracious to raise them, if to raise them seem to imply that there is no liberal education in the West which is not Catholic, I can only say that it is where the logic leads.

But no logic keeps us from exultation that St. John's has ventured bravely where the "practical men" within Catholic ranks had told us that there was no right of way.

## SPARE THE ROD AND MAKE BRATS

SISTER MARY JUSTINE, S.C.N.



I AM not one of those individuals who thinks that everything is wrong with the present generation, and that everything beautiful and noble belonged to an age that is past. But I do agree with Lin Yutang in that our American culture was cut short by the gold rush of the 1840's, and that material prosperity and a machine age have further affected us, and that, as a nation, we are not what we started out to be.

Our young folks are growing up without manners, so that we cannot even glimpse an age of culture in the distance. The children rule the home; advise, when they do not command, their parents; and are injured and miserable when any quietus is put on their genius for disorganizing affairs at school.

And I am not blaming the young people one bit. You and I will take as much power to ourselves as our indulgent neighbors will permit us to make away with. It is the way of human nature. But somewhere in our background there was an ethical training that we are not transmitting to our children. Our elders partially made us realize where we fit in the scheme of creation. In Shakespeare's day, and in our youth, it was a wise son that could astonish his mother; now, it is a wise parent that can astonish his child.

Our boys and girls would put the wisdom of Solomon to shame; they are precocious beyond what is human; they scintillate—in spurts. And



for the sake of your school paper, your scientific demonstration, your publicity program, you wear yourself out to keep them scintillating until your program is completed, and you are fortunate if they do not sputter out and leave you in an emergency. You and I have never possessed any such brilliant ideas as have the boys and girls we are training; their flashes of genius are enviable. But they sputter and go out, and woe betide us in their going.

Can we make our young folk dependable? Some of them are, it is true. But the majority of them are not. And surely we ambition the majority. Or do we? I am inclined to think that in our admiration of their youth and beauty and wisdom, we forget we have anything to offer them. We forget they need us. In contrast with their youth, we find ourselves antiquated, out of fashion, or fading, and dull of wit.

Besides there is the humiliating avowal that we are not perfect ourselves. We cannot overcome all of our faults. "The just man falls seven times a day." If we did not have faults, we would be unbearably perfect. But we have reached the stage where our defects are displeasing; we do not account them virtues. They are our shame, not our glory. But I do not know how our young people ever, even in ripe old age, are going to find it possible to think that they could be mistaken in their judgment or behavior if we are going to permit them to argue with us now on a basis of equality, if we are going to surrender to their opinions and capitulate, in almost every matter of importance, before their superior wisdom.

Our parents and teachers may have made mistakes in dealing with us, but they did not make any greater mistakes than we are making. They realized that their experience was an asset over our youth, and they did not regard us as oracles whom to offend was to displease the gods, an attitude one commonly encounters among the youth of our present generation.

Recently a little ten-year-old boy in our neighborhood suffered a serious accident to his eye. His little classmates went to see him, took him cookies, and fruit, and soldiers—whole regiments of soldiers. They were good-hearted little lads, with the goodness every lad has in him at the core. But this happened: one day they went rushing into his room with this exciting piece of news: "O, Junior, we are going to have a surprise for you when you come back to school." And Junior sat up to listen. "Yes, we are going to have a surprise for you; we are going to call you 'One-Eye'." And the little boy fell back on his pillow. Bad little boys had not done this; but untrained, neglected little boys had. And our country, unfortunately for the age, is full of these little boys.

A sixth-grade child I know is a cripple. Her little playmates call her "Big-Foot." One mother admonished her little daughter in the way our mothers might have admonished us: "And to think how quickly something could happen to you that would make you a cripple the rest of your life. I will switch you well if I ever hear of your calling the

little girl by that name again." And the child knew her mother was not "just threatening." But the other little girls go on saying "Big-Foot." They are not bad little girls either; but they probably have mothers after the pattern of one whom I recently heard saying: "I try never to tell my little son anything that he will have to obey." And this from a woman who is doubtless a good Christian. Or am I mistaken?

But the little girls are not bad little girls; they are only untrained, neglected little girls. And those little boys, and these little girls will grow up to high-school age. They will not be bad boys and girls, but they will have been untrained and neglected; they will have been crossed very little anywhere in their lives and they will not be able to take it; some of them will be brainy, and they will scintillate in spurts, but they will want their own way and they will say: "Why study Latin? Latin can't get you anywhere. There just isn't any sense in studying Latin." And the teachers will agree under their breath: "Maybe there isn't for such as you." The teachers waver undecidedly; they are in doubt.

And the young folks persist: "I think geometry is the craziest subject they teach here. Nobody ever remembers it. I've asked lots of boys and girls who went to this school if they ever got anything out of it and they said 'not a thing.' And I've asked boys and girls who went to other schools and they said it didn't do them any good either." The teachers look stupid in trying to look wise, and they say again under their breath: "True, you will never get anything out of it."

They talk it over at the faculty meeting: "We must keep the children in school, and they will not stay if they are unhappy." The principal asks: "How many pupils have we who really cannot learn Latin?" There is an awkward pause, to relieve which one of the teachers volunteers: "In my class of twenty there are four who do not seem to have ability, but there are twelve who hate Latin, and only four who like it." The other teachers promptly reduce their tabulations to this denominator, and so Latin is made elective, and geometry is made elective, and second-year algebra is made elective, and history is made elective, and we introduce snap courses, if we can afford the teachers. If we cannot afford them, as is the case in the majority of our schools, we bemoan our fortune instead of our misfortune.

Young people of the best spiritual endowments are becoming disgusted with things as they are. They feel the need of direction, but they find us inadequate and incompetent. They have lost faith in us because we are lacking convictions. Youth is a problem, and a problem of our making, but the burden of solving we would fain leave to youth. We need another Elizabeth Barrett Browning to write another *Cry of the Children*—the cry of modern children struggling under insupportable moral burdens laid on their shoulders by their ultra-civilized elders who, instead of being mothers, fathers and teachers to their children, as nature ordains, insist on being *pals*.

# JUDGES DIVE INTO VAST SEA OF CLIPPINGS

## And come up with prize-winners of Bias Contest

JOHN A. TOOMEY, S.J.

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AFTER having been waist-deep in clippings for days, the judges of the Bias Contest announce they are ready to name the winners.

The first prize of twenty-five dollars is awarded to A. H. McDonald, of Tenafly, N. J. In his letter Mr. McDonald submits an example of anti-Catholic bias, and remarks: "It must have been clear to the editor that anything as blasphemous as this should never be printed in a daily newspaper. There seems to be only one remedy. If we refuse to patronize any paper publishing any such letters as this and do so as a body, most papers will clean their pages."

The example submitted by Mr. McDonald is printed as a letter on the editorial page of the *Bergen Evening Record*, Hackensack, N. J. It occupies about a column. Here are some excerpts:

As for the prominent New York minister who is alleged to have said privately that he considered Jesus the illegitimate son of Mary by a Roman soldier. . . . I have for some time considered it the most probable explanation of Jesus' birth and so must any realistic twentieth-century man or woman . . . the "ethics of Jesus" about which no one knows enough to write two whole pages and which have little to do with our present-day problems. . . . Jesus, if he did live and do all the (contradictory) things ascribed to him, was illiterate in most things compared to a man like Dr. Ward or any other enlightened progressive of this century. I find the Jesus stereotype (as Harry Elmer Barnes calls it)—the attempt to claim quite unusual qualities of intellect, discernment, wisdom and ethical and moral greatness for a person, real or mythical, whom we know as Jesus of Nazareth, who allegedly lived and died nearly 2,000 years ago—nothing short of ridiculous. We do not need Jesus or even Confucius (a far greater moralist and teacher in my estimation) to solve our present social, economic, political, moral, ethical or hygienic problems. . . .

Another letter by the same letter-writer was also printed in the *Bergen Evening Record* on another date. We quote excerpts from this, which also approximated a column:

God is retreating further and further into the dim mists of the latest idealistic philosophies, which have already enshrouded him so that he appears, as Haeckel long ago remarked, a gaseous vertebrate. The sooner God is relegated to the realm of mythology, whence he originally came, the better . . . an angry God infected with a purity complex . . . the ravings of sexophobic maniacs like Paul, Augustine, and the other early Church Fathers, most of whom

should have been in strait-jackets or lunatic asylums (and would be today). . . .

Second prize of fifteen dollars goes to J. William Dillman, Jersey City, N. J. He submits a piece printed in the New York University magazine, *The Apprentice*. The scene is Madrid, April 1936. José, a young University student, Padre Juan Bicio, Capitán Eduardo Fuersa engage in conversation. The young radical, José, is the hero; the other two the villains. Here follows some of José's bright patter:

That warrior you call the Church

Fetters a million tired serfs who pour their pennies  
Into its hungry hands,

Only because it brandishes a sword of Fear. . . .

Of life everlasting, and this nonsense of remission  
of all sin,

I know nothing, nor do you, good father. . . .

Even your sandalled Jesuits travel the seas

On great luxurious liners, feasting on richest food  
and clearest wine.

What do they care about sick souls? . . .

Centuries may pass before Spain wakes and comprehends. . . .

Spain is ruled by you: The Church, The Army, and a  
crumbling Aristocracy. . . .

The Church—tainted with secular greed, the wish  
for power: . . .

Or that endless scores of soldiers die each year

Defending Jesuit mines in Africa!

The general and the Jesuit go hand in hand across  
the face of Spain

Leaving bareness and desolation in their wake. . . .

Contestants in California, Illinois, Ohio and New York sent in the *Ladies Home Journal's* contribution to the Bias Contest. This article—a plain effort to spread birth-control propaganda—states that fifty-one per cent of the Catholic women of America believe in birth control. To Edwina Sanford, New Rochelle, N. Y., goes the third prize of ten dollars for her analysis of the *Ladies Home Journal* propaganda. She writes:

In giving what he claims to be a cross-section of the opinions of the women of America, Mr. Pringle (the author) states that fifty-one per cent of the Catholic women interviewed "declared their belief in some remedy, without specification as to whether natural or artificial. . . ." A few questions might be asked concerning the validity of this survey. First, exactly how many Catholic women were interviewed? Second, why was it not specifically stated what kind of birth control was advocated—natural or artificial? To be valid, a survey should be specific



and should include numerous instances. This article does not state definitely what is meant by the term birth control, nor does it give the exact number of women interviewed. In view of the fact that the Catholic Church emphatically declares artificial methods of birth control are wrong, this article, by its vagueness, is subtly spreading the idea that the teachings of the Church do not mean much to Catholics, and as such is a flagrant example of anti-Catholic bias.

George Holland, Halifax, N. S., Canada, walks off with the fourth prize, five dollars. He forwarded an article printed in the magazine *Fact Digest*, from which comes the following pearl:

There were ten dark, dirty centuries during the majority of which the Christian church frowned on bathing as a frivolous, earthly practice sanctioned by the pagan Romans. Those who dared to take a bath during the Dark Ages did so at the risk of excommunication from the church.

Fifth prize, five dollars, is awarded to John J. Sulger, Laurelton, L. I. Mr. Sulger submitted a fictional story printed in the *Esquire* magazine. The story introduces Johnstone Harlan Connor, Catholic, member of the Foreign Relations Committee of the United States Senate. Catholic clergy are insisting that Senator Connor have the United States army sent into Mexico, annex that country, stop the religious persecution. Senator Connor, his conscience "sorely troubled," journeys to Mexico. Contestant Sulger writes:

The article is an insidious piece of propaganda against the Church. . . . The Senator is bewildered because the very powerful Catholic minority and the very high prelates are attempting to force the United States against the will of the majority of Americans to send an army into Mexico. . . . Of course, very powerful and unscrupulous oil interests are behind the Church using her as a tool for their own profit. The story winds up its attack with the usual anti-Christian punch line to the effect that " . . . during all these four centuries since the conquest, the Church has been one of the most flagrant of oppressors, and . . . it has invariably sided with the rich and powerful as against the poor and helpless."

Mrs. H. F. Mengden, Houston, Tex., captures the sixth prize, five dollars with her submission of an article from *Foreign Affairs*, entitled *Embryo Fascism in Quebec*. The piece pillories the Catholic Hierarchy in the Province of Quebec, Canada. It is enough, writes Mrs. Mengden, "to make one's blood boil, for the unfair and misleading" treatment "of the Catholic position in Quebec." Referring to a somewhat similar piece in another magazine, she adds "it almost seems as if there is a definite effort being made to discredit the Church in the Catholic province of Canada by various groups. . . ."

Seventh prize, five dollars, travels out to Sister Mary Ethelind, Oregon. Sister clipped and mailed in the following editorial from the *Oregon Journal*, of Portland, Ore.

It was in Spain, at the Franco front. A lecturer harangued candidates for appointment as pilots and bombers to attack unfortified towns. . . . First, he said, the bombing planes would circle the town once or twice. This, to drive the people into shelters and dugouts. Then the bombers would return and drop bombs and hand grenades with the utmost system, covering all conspicuous buildings and streets. . . . People would rush from the buildings, falling about their ears due to the impact of high explosive bombs.

Then, when the streets were jammed, the planes would fly low, spraying the struggling mass with machine gun bullets in order to kill as many as possible with a minimum of expenditure. . . . "We must break open the tin before we can get at the sardines," explained the lecturer. Then he went on to tell how incendiary bombs would be used to burn out any victims left. Finally, the air fighters were told to continue the bombardment until the town was completely destroyed. . . . War to the last baby!

E. Earl Moore, Rochester, N. Y. captures the eighth prize, five dollars. He submitted an article from *Liberty* magazine. The article is by H. G. Wells. An excerpt reads:

It (Liberalism) did much to release thought and education from the stifling influence of ecclesiastical control. It participated in that great intellectual release which swept aside the grosser legends of Christianity in favor of the wider vision of modern biology.

Says Mr. Moore in his letter:

I have boxed in the paragraph which I believe is typical of just what is meant by an anti-Catholic bias. The mere fact that the article came from the mind and hand of H. G. Wells had caused me to scan it with just that thought in mind. I was sure that somewhere in its sugary generalities it would conceal a lurking poison of bias. . . . You will note that the Catholic Church is indicted on the same old counts that invariably crop up when such as H. G. Wells are attacking her.

Mr. J. P. Kelliher, of New York City, receives the ninth prize, five dollars. Mr. Kelliher advises he went through all the issues of the *New York Times* for the month of March to satisfy himself of the charge that the *Times* published "a great deal more news from the Loyalist side of the Spanish conflict than from the Nationalist side." He writes:

My check-up confirms this charge very definitely. A tabulation of the amount of space in linear inches, devoted to dispatches originating in Loyalist Spain as compared with dispatches from Nationalist Spain shows the following:

Matthews	425½"	Carney	131"
Fernsworth	133"	Other Nationalist	
Other Loyalist sources	127"	sources	52½"
	685½"		183½"

These figures are approximate inasmuch as the measurements were made to the nearest one-half inch; where the space measured over one-quarter inch it was counted as one-half inch, and where the measurement was under one-quarter inch it was disregarded.

Mr. Kelliher adds there were seventeen news dispatches from Hendaye, France, some of which included statements of both sides. He figured about ninety-three inches of these Hendaye dispatches indicated the Nationalist view. According to Mr. Kelliher's figures, the *Times* printed sixty-three articles from the Loyalist section as compared with thirty-five from the Nationalist. Referring to a *Times* correspondent in Loyalist Spain, Mr. Kelliher writes: "Some of his reports sound like hand-outs from the Loyalist propagandists."

This concludes the distribution of prizes. In a succeeding article, an analysis of all the returns to the Bias Contest will be made. To the many contestants who cooperated so splendidly, we extend our deepest appreciation. We wish we could give each one a prize.

## THE N. C. E. A. CONVENTION

YEAR by year delegates from all parts of the country gather in convention under the auspices of the National Catholic Educational Association. Here questions of vital import are discussed, and in its annual *Resolutions* the Association presents the conclusions as well as the hopes and aspirations of Catholic educators. The Association claims no authority to legislate, but many of the policies which have been adopted by Catholic school and college administrators were first formulated at these meetings.

From the Milwaukee Convention of 1938, we may look for a policy of enlightenment and encouragement. Catholic educators, as a body, are keenly, even painfully, aware of many problems, some domestic, others arising from the political and economic perplexities of this day. Unfortunately, too few of the laity even know that these problems exist. They realize, in varying degree, that Catholic schools are doing a work beyond the power of any other type of school to do, and they would resent any attempt by the civil authority to suppress these schools, or to discriminate against them. But these words say about all that can be said of their intelligent interest in Catholic education.

One example of the difficulties encountered by our school administrators is outlined in the April issue of *The Social Frontier* in an article entitled "Shall the Public Schools Be Public?" The general tone of this publication can be indicated by stating that it continually burns incense before John Dewey and Leon Trotsky, but the article in question seems to betray the hand of George S. Strayer, of Teachers College, Columbia. The chief thesis of the author is that no part of the Federal money which, according to the recent report of the President's Advisory Committee on Education, is to be made available to the several States, shall be used except for the public schools. "What we protest," writes the author, "is the tacit assumption that . . . the authoritarian ethics of the Judaeo-Christian tradition must be specifically bolstered by taxpayers' resources."

The administrators of our Catholic schools, acting under the Bishops, are quite capable of formulating their answer to *The Social Frontier*. From a legal point of view, nothing prevents the use of Federal money for schools which teach "the authoritarian ethics of the Judaeo-Christian tradition." Whether this money should be asked, or even accepted, by Catholic schools is another question which will likewise be answered by the constituted authorities. But we cannot help wondering what answer our Catholic people, as a body, would give, and on what grounds.

One of the functions of the Association is to stimulate an intelligent understanding among non-Catholics and Catholics of the problems of Catholic education. Our enemies have outlined for us one of these problems, and we feel sure that in meeting it we shall be guided wisely by the counsels of the Association.

## BREAD AND LIBERTY

THE people who barter their liberty for bread will soon want both. Governments cannot long provide the people with bread and circuses, and none of them try. Instead, every dictator puts his people on decreasing rations, and throws the objectors into prison. Not long ago, an American politician admitted that government had rubbed out the strict limitations of the Constitution, but added that in consequence the people were more prosperous. He could not add that consequence today. Only a people that defends its rightful liberties relentlessly can have bread.

## CORPORATIONS UNDE

THREE great corporations, the Western Union, the telephone company, and the Republic Steel Co., find themselves threatened by the Government's "big stick." As to the stick, the Government has apparently adopted Theodore Roosevelt's advice, but it is not walking softly, nor talking softly, either. Through the National Labor Relations Board and other Federal agencies, it is shouting that certain rich malefactors now in high place must speedily be brought low.

It is always popular to belabor the telephone company. No one who has argued, with a growing sense of futility, over a bill submitted by this omniscient corporation, or fumed with impotent rage on being connected with one wrong number after another, will doubt that the company is among the basest of the denounced malefactors. At the same time, we accept with considerable doubt the assurance of the Government's expert that the company could easily reduce its expenses by twenty-five per cent. Were any expert of this expertness in existence, the company would long ago have put him on its payroll. Hence, it will be well to lay aside what is almost an innate prejudice against the telephone company, and wait for further evidence. Even a peccant corporation must have its day in court.

The chief counts of the indictments against the other corporations arise out of their labor relations. Here too it should be remembered that what has been published by the Government is an indictment, not a proof of guilt. Ultimately, the charges will be threshed out in



## PUMP-PRIMING

AFTER five years of pump-priming, the public debt is greater by seventeen billions, and two million men have been added to the army of the unemployed. Perhaps the wrong pumps were primed. Perhaps the primers were maladroit. Since we are once more asked to prime the pumps, why not try to learn from our past unhappy experiences? Pump-priming that does not enable private industry to put men back to work is not useless, but disastrous since it increases the evil against which it was directed. Let us first have some investigation of this futile pump-priming.

## NS UNDER THE HARROW

the courts, and there is no reason to suppose that the companies will hesitate to demand protection for the least of their legal rights. Probably the most serious of the accusations which the Western Union is summoned to answer is that it formed a company union, and by "coercion, intimidation and discrimination," collected about \$500,000 from the cowed employees. Thereafter it "appropriated the said \$500,000 collected from its employees, to its own use."

While the Western Union is merely summoned to answer charges, the steel company stands convicted by the Labor Board. The Board asserts that the company's "employee-representation plan" is an illegal employer-controlled union, and must be disbanded. It further finds that the company discharged employees for the crime of joining a union of their choice, maintained a spy system in many of its plants, and used violent methods to terrorize union adherents, and to turn the civil authorities and business interests against the C.I.O. union. The chief of these violent methods was tear-gas; in one instance, a shotgun was used.

These indictments recall pages from the past which detail capital's dealings with labor. At the same time, it is regrettable that the Wagner Act, under which the Government moved, does not cover any misdeeds of which a union may be guilty. We trust that in proceedings to come, the whole story will be told. Labor has nothing to gain from fire and sword, nor has capital.

## JEALOUSY, NOT TRUST

NOW that the battle is over, it is clear that the Congressmen who argued "this is simply a matter of reorganizing the executive departments" were in error. To us the argument always lacked appeal, for we could not see that the issue was a mere difference of opinion about the timeliness of reorganization, or its necessity. Reorganization is a reform long overdue, and no sane man opposes it. But other factors were involved, and it seems to us that the *Atlanta Constitution* singles out the most important of these when it remarks that the unexpected defeat of the Administration's reorganization bill "culminates a steady move back to complete independence by the legislative branch of the Federal Government."

That independence is of infinitely greater moment than reorganization, important as this reform certainly is. The truth is that this Government cannot function constitutionally, unless its three coordinate branches retain unimpaired the independence prescribed by the Federal Constitution. Either it will not function at all, or, more probably, it will function as a dictatorial power. But, as Congressman Hatton W. Sumners, one of the ablest lawyers in Congress, recently observed on the floor of the House, we have not had an independent Congress for some years.

The reason why Congress gradually ceded its independence is now fairly clear. Five years ago, it faced an "emergency," and it also faced an Administration which demanded immediate action. Under the urging that "something must be done, and done now," Congress again and again enacted legislation sent it for approval, with scant time for examination, and after a short and controlled deliberation. What is worse, much of this legislation transferred to boards and bureaus and even to individuals, powers of which Congress cannot constitutionally divest itself. By alienating these powers, even temporarily, Congress inaugurated a process of which the necessary conclusion is the destruction of an essential branch of the Government. The last five years have emphasized the truth of Jefferson's dictum that governments, or departments of governments, with difficulty relinquish a power once granted, but always seek to enlarge it.

Yet "emergency," the Supreme Court has repeatedly ruled, vests no branch of the Government with a power which it does not already possess. Still less does it justify the merging of one department with any other. The defeat of the reorganization bill can be traced directly to the fear of an aroused people that this plea of emergency was being used to further the subjection of the legislative to the executive branch of the Government. They had not forgotten the plan for the reorganization of the Supreme Court which they banned as soon as they perceived in it an attempt to weaken the independence of the country's highest court. They were in no mood to countenance a similar attempt against Congress.

One other phase of this conflict is of such mo-

ment that we cannot pass it over. From the beginning of this Administration we have heard much of the trust which we should place in elected officials. During the debates on the bill, members of Congress were assured that the President would refrain from using some of the powers given him, and in any case would use all wisely. To our mind, trust of this kind is highly dangerous. When it becomes widespread among the people, the way is opened for another Hitler, to an even more dangerous Stalin. In our judgment, Jefferson stated the proper American attitude, in the *Kentucky Resolutions* (1798):

It would be a dangerous delusion were a confidence in the men of our choice to silence our fears for the safety of our rights. Confidence is everywhere the parent of despotism; free government is founded in jealousy, not in confidence. It is jealousy and not confidence which prescribes limited constitutions to bind down those whom we entrust with power. Our Constitution has, accordingly, fixed the limits to which, and no further, our confidence may go. In questions of power, then, let no more be heard of confidence in man, but bind him down from mischief by the chains of the Constitution.

The battle, if not the campaign, has ended. The country owes a debt of gratitude to the Congressmen who, sustained by motives of high patriotism, grimly fought on even when the day seemed lost. By yielding, they might have placed their political fortunes beyond hazard, for the debate on April 8 revealed an offer of a vast amount of political patronage. They spurned the offer, and in keeping with the finest traditions of House and Senate, once more affirmed the constitutional independence of the three branches of this Government.

## TAGS AND LABELS

ALL of us have met a raconteur who tells his stories with such wealth of detail that after his tenth audience he begins to believe them himself. He is a victim of his own eloquence.

All of us, too, are apt to be carried away by a similar practice in our thinking. We associate a town with some beauty or defect, observed when passing through it, perhaps in a speeding car. Thereafter that place is to us an Eden or a city of the plain. We label a party or a movement with a convenient tag, and thereafter it is always virtuous in our thinking, or vicious.

Usually the practice does no great harm. But it may lead us sadly astray if we yield to it in matters of serious moment. All of us are eager to promote, for instance, social welfare. But it does not follow that every bill in Congress or a legislature which aims to promote this welfare is actually calculated to promote it. As Lincoln once said, a sheep will have four legs, even if you say it has only three.

One sorely needed measure for social welfare is wage-and-hour legislation. But we must not be too quick to agree that any and every bill with this label will fatten the worker's pay-envelope. If it fixes minimum wage without preventing this wage from becoming the maximum, it will reduce his income.

## PEACE

DARK clouds hang over the world. Suspicion and hatred inflame men's minds and prepare nations for war. In many parts of this world, the hand of brother is raised against brother in bloody conflict, and in countries yet at peace, men toil and sweat as they forge the weapons to be used when war comes. Governments prepare for strife and struggle, and bitter suffering as their people hunger.

To this troubled world Our Lord would bring peace. Many centuries ago, as related in the Gospel for tomorrow (Saint John xx, 19-31) He appeared to His disciples, gathered in the Upper Room, greeting them with the salutation: "Peace be to you." It was the greeting of peace which the Angels sang on the night He was born, and it is the greeting He wishes to give the world today. But it is a greeting that can be accepted only by men of good will, and, unfortunately, too many men in high place, men whose influence can sway nations, are strangers to that good will. For Christ and His serene doctrine are disregarded by them.

For them it is our duty to pray. When grace opens their eyes, they too will be able to see Our Lord as He shows them the wounds in His hands and His side. Grace opened the eyes of doubting Thomas, and as he put his hand into the wound in Our Lord's sacred side, he believed and proclaimed Jesus to be his Lord and his God. What God's grace did for Thomas, it can do not only for the doubters of this age, but also for those who, unlike Thomas, have never followed Our Lord, but have opposed Him and reviled Him. Of doubters and persecutors, Grace can make apostles.

As we pray for Christ's peace in the hearts of the leaders of nations, let us rejoice in the peace that Christ has won for us. This peace, as one of the Fathers has written, is three-fold. First, Our Lord gives us peace with God the Father, reconciled with us by the Sacrifice upon the Cross, then peace with our neighbor united with us in Christ, and finally, peace in our own hearts which is peace of conscience. Our Lord wishes us to enjoy this peace, and to enjoy it in its fullness. It is a peace which the world cannot give, a peace which those who follow the dictates and maxims of the world can never know, a peace which will be strong to sustain us, no matter how severe our trials may be.

Worldly-minded as we are, we often catch ourselves yearning after the comforts that wealth brings, in a belief (which we do not like to acknowledge even to ourselves) that in these things we shall find peace. It is a fatal delusion. Not only the writings of the Saints, those geniuses in religion who knew human nature so well because they knew themselves, but secular history can teach us that wealth and place do not create peace. Only in trying to keep unbroken that peace with God Our Father which Jesus won for us, and peace with our neighbor, shall we attain to that true peace of conscience which eases our troubled hearts, and gives us courage to bear with life's trials until the dawning of that blessed day which begins our everlasting peace in Heaven.



# CHRONICLE

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THE ADMINISTRATION. Unexpected defeat of the bill for the reorganization of the executive departments was followed by a letter from the President to Representative Rayburn, expressing his thanks to the House floor-leader and to Speaker Bankhead. The President repeated his opinion that the bill was "intended to simplify and improve the public service," but that since the question it presented was "solely one of policy," the defeat of the bill "should offer no occasion for personal recrimination, and there should be none." The defeat of the bill was generally taken to mean a vote of lack of confidence in the President. Possibly this opinion was based on the fact that immediately before the vote was taken, Mr. Rayburn and the Speaker, after making every possible concession to the bill's opponents, even offering them a share in post-office patronage, appealed to the house to support the President. Incidentally, following the defeat of the bill, the stock market had its healthiest day since October 23, 1937. . . . The announcement through the press of another era of pump-priming stirred Senator Byrd, Republican floor-leader Snell, and other prominent members of Congress, to object. Senator Byrd and Mr. Snell agreed on the continuance of aid for the unemployed, but asserted that the Government's "spending policy" was largely responsible for the present depression. . . . A somewhat sensational statement, carried by a few newspapers, to the effect that Vice-President Garner in one of the President's conferences had "vehemently" registered his disapproval of increased spending by the Government, was denied by the President. . . . In a message to Congress on the financial difficulties of the railroads, the President submitted the recommendations of a special committee, consisting of three members of the Interstate Commerce Commission. While asking for legislation "in order to prevent serious financial and operating difficulties between now and the convening of the next Congress," the President did not set forth his own views as to the lines this legislation should follow. He did, however, state his "definite objection" to a plan providing government subsidies enabling railroads to meet the interest on their outstanding bonds, "or for any other purpose," and he also opposed "government ownership and operation of the railroads." Ultimately, it would become necessary, the President thought, to reorganize the Interstate Commerce Commission. It had been exercising executive powers which in all probability were unconstitutional "in that they create executive authority in a fourth branch of the Government instead of in the President." This was a reminder to Congress of its lack of wisdom in declining to enact the President's reorganization bill. In spite of the urgency of the railroads' needs, it did not seem probable that Congress would act.

LABOR. Two decisions of far-reaching importance were handed down by the National Labor Relations Board. In the first, the Board ordered the Inland Steel Co. to sign all agreements with its employees reached under the Wagner Act; and in the second, it held that the Republic Steel Co. had violated the Act on a number of counts. Both rulings have been rejected by the companies concerned, and appeals will be taken to the courts. It is recognized that the Act is about to undergo a severe test. Under the law, as it now exists, employers are obliged to deal with unions chosen by the employees, even though the conduct of the union be such that the employers believe it to be irresponsible. The charges made by the Board against the Republic Steel Co. are based on the assertion that this company has maintained a fraudulent labor union, and that it employed violent methods to break up a C.I.O. union. Workers as well as employers are prepared to find in these cases a test of the Wagner Act. Employees believe that the courts must sustain their right to form their own unions, and to bargain with their employers. On the other side, employers object that under the Wagner Act the Board declines to function as a judicial body, and assumes that no union can be guilty of wrong-doing. In view of the fact that the issues are of vital importance to the public and to wage-earners, as well as to employers, it was thought that the Wagner Act would be re-examined by the next Congress without waiting for the decision of the courts in the present cases.

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FRANCE. Premier Léon Blum resigned on April 8, when the French Senate by an overwhelming vote refused to grant him the special financial powers he had requested. The Senate's refusal appeared to be more a vindication of its own constitutional rights than an actual gesture of hostility against the financial proposals. M. Blum did not wait for the formality of a vote of confidence, and within one hour the President had invited M. Daladier to form a new government. . . . With the announcement of the Daladier ministry coming on the same day as the Austrian plebiscite it was clear that the Popular Front was broken. The new Government eliminated all Communists, took in several members of the Center, cheerfully lost the formal support of the Socialists and hoped to compensate with new votes from the Right. The new Ministry enraged the Leftist workers of the capital and new walkouts and sit-downs brought the total of strikers close to 180,000. But M. Daladier won his vote of confidence, with all parties assenting, even the Communists and Socialists. . . . Within twenty-four hours the Premier presented Parliament with a request for power to rule the country by decree until the end of July and for immense financial

authority. At the same time he negotiated an agreement with the General Labor Federation which promised to bring the armament workers' strikes to a quick conclusion. One day later the Chamber, by the tremendous majority of 508 to 12, approved his Full Powers Bill; immediate concurrence from the Senate was given.

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MEXICO. The British Minister presented personally to President Cárdenas a protest against the seizure of British oil properties in Mexico. Said the note, the seizure was "inherently unjust"; Britain did not grant Mexico's right to expropriate the properties, declared that the action violated international law and usage, that it was punitive. . . . In this, Britain did not follow the American lead which waived the question of the right of Mexico to expropriate the properties but demanded indemnification. . . . Meanwhile, the British Companies prepared to disorganize, stating it would be impossible to continue operations even if properties were returned. . . . On April 12, Mexico answered in a 2,000 word note, with point by point rejoinder to Great Britain, and definitely closed the case.

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GERMANY. General Goering's prediction that the April 10 plebiscite would result in a one hundred per cent victory for Chancellor Hitler was slightly exaggerated. In Germany, the "Ja" votes numbered 44,362,667; the "Nein" votes amounted to 440,429; invalid, 69,606; giving a percentage of 99.02 to Hitler. In Austria, 4,403,208 voted "Ja"; 11,807, voted "Nein"; invalid ballots, 5,763; percentage for Hitler, 99.73. Thus was Austrian Anschluss completed, by the will of the people, lending moral influence to force. . . . The list of those nominated to the Greater German Reichstag by the Hitler National Socialist party, the only party, contained 1,717 names. Of these, 833 Deputies were elected, those not elected were held as alternates, to fill vacancies as they arose. . . . On the eve of the plebiscite, Chancellor Hitler delivered his final campaign address in Vienna: "I believe it was God's will to send this Austrian boy to the Reich and to permit him to return as a mature man to reunite the two great sections of the German people." . . . The retraction of Cardinal Innitzer, published in Rome, was not printed in any paper in the Reich. The people will probably never know he retracted. The only Catholic papers published in Austria and Germany advocated support of Anschluss, and the clergy cast assenting votes.

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SPAIN. Generalissimo Franco's march to the sea moved forward more slowly along a 125 mile front. Notable advance was made on the extreme right wing when General Miguel Aranda's Navarrese brigades struck suddenly in the direction of Vinaroz and advanced to the outskirts of San Mateo, twelve miles from the sea. Along the entire front stiffened resistance met the steady advance of the Nationalist army, driving toward Tortosa and Tarragona.

All available Loyalist troops, estimated at 200,000, were rushed into the threatened section to prevent, if possible, the threatened severing of the Barcelona-Valencia highway. Fresh military supplies at the rate of approximately 2,000 tons daily were being rushed into Spain from France. Large and small tanks, trucks, artillery, munitions and planes, declared to be of French and Russian make, were trucked into Catalonia from France and French ports. Reports from Barcelona attributed the retarding of the Nationalist advances to the new equipment. . . . The capture of Tremp, site of the largest hydro-electric station supplying sixty per cent of Barcelona's power, was a decided blow to the Loyalists. Factories in the city were seriously crippled. Retreating Government forces were prevented from dynamiting the sluice gates at Tremp by General José Moscardó's surprised dash into the mountain town. As a result 4,000 militiamen were forced to retreat over the mountain passes into France. Thousands of refugees poured into Andorra and neighboring French towns. . . . In an attempt to divert the attack on the Mediterranean front a Loyalist offensive was launched into the Cáceres Province. Slight advances were later reported to have been checked and repulsed. . . . The Nationalist drive was halted by the Nationalist high command for the purpose of consolidating lines, repairing railroads, bridges and roads, and organizing a large-scale offensive in their final drive on the Mediterranean coast.

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CHINA-JAPAN. The Chinese delivered a crushing blow to the Japanese forces in the southern Shantung province. The fighting centered around Taierhchwang, the tip of the Japanese drive towards Suchow. Here, unexpectedly, the Chinese brought up heavy reinforcements and offered a counter-offensive. First reports indicated that the Japanese advance had been stopped.

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ROME. The exhibition of atheist and anti-religious propaganda was brought to a close on April 9. Staged at the Pontifical Russian College, this collection of exhibits bared the methods and means used by Communism in its fight, both in Russia and in other countries, against religion in general and the Catholic Church in particular. . . . The Vatican Easter ceremonies closed with the canonization of three new Saints—Father Andrew Bobóla, a Polish Jesuit, martyred in Russia in 1658; Salvador la Herta, a lay Franciscan of Sardinia; and Giovanni Leonardi, priest founder of the Clerics of the Mother of God. . . . A newspaper correspondent, Heinz Ludwig, of the Catholic *Reichspost* (Vienna), was expelled from Rome on the charge of spreading anti-Nazi propaganda, and specifically for providing the press with the text of the Vatican radio station's broadcast against Cardinal Innitzer. . . . After a formal meeting between the British Ambassador and Count Ciano, it was declared that the Anglo-Italian agreement was ready for initialing and official drafting.



# CORRESPONDENCE

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## PHILOSOPHY TEACHING

EDITOR: As is evident from his letter (March 26), there are two points at issue between Father Beglan and myself. The first is a question of fact, the second a question of principle, out of which arises a question of the method of teaching philosophy. I leave aside the personal element in this discussion as being relevant only if it throws some light on the facts.

As to the question of fact, Father Beglan considers that my article was confused and that in reality "a good amount of sound, solid teaching has been done in American Catholic colleges and seminaries" which I ignore. I could well concede the truth of such a statement and still contend, as indeed I must, that the place of philosophy in Catholic colleges today is not a healthy one.

In that case there is a radical disproportion between our supposedly good teaching and the results it has achieved. If we have been so successful, how does it happen that we have not produced an outstanding Catholic philosopher during the period of Father Beglan's own thirty years of observation? It is surely notorious that we look to French and German writers and thinkers as examples of eminent Scholastic philosophers. Any one who has attended Catholic philosophical conventions during the last ten years is aware that the lack of a well-ordered body of philosophical ideas is the constant and unofficial business of all the delegates who are present.

As to the question of principle, it appears that Father Beglan and I are not looking at philosophy from the same point of view. While he recognizes the autonomy of philosophy, he goes on to say that it is "a form of apologetics, though indirectly, as is every subject taught in the curriculum of a Catholic college."

Now this is not true. Even within the department of religion not every subject is a form of apologetics, for there is surely a difference between apologetics and dogmatic theology. Furthermore, since apologetics has for its purpose to defend the credibility of Catholic dogma in general, I submit that to call philosophy a form of apologetics is to adopt a theological point of view toward it, not a philosophical one. Even indirectly the philosopher cannot make any such pretensions. So long as he is acting as a philosopher he recognizes that apologetics does not lie within his competence. His business as a philosopher is to learn the meaning of the universe as attainable by the natural reason, and he asks for philosophy the liberty to contemplate the truth thus obtained. It is impossible to conceive that the subordination of philosophy to theology changes in any way the formal object of philosophy. Where in Saint Thomas Aquinas will

Father Beglan find any other doctrine different from this?

Father Beglan considers that I have confused graduate and undergraduate teaching in philosophy. There is certainly a distinction between the two levels of teaching. But ought it to mean that an undergraduate course leaves the student unprepared for graduate work and, what is worse, uninterested in and indifferent to philosophy, and unaffected by it?

It is not captious criticism to say that the habit of teaching philosophy as a form of apologetics has produced an apologetic attitude within philosophy itself. Such an attitude has reduced philosophy to an array of forbidding formulas embodied in textbooks. This method of teaching has been known to drive intelligent students away from philosophy. I can add that it is unknown to Saint Thomas Aquinas. And perhaps between even the best textbooks and Saint Thomas, the Angelical Doctor ought to serve as a model and a guide.

New York, N. Y.

ANTON C. PEGIS

## PHILOSOPHY UNDIVIDED

EDITOR: Having agreed very heartily with the thought of Dr. Pegis' article on how the colleges teach philosophy (AMERICA, March 12), I should like to take issue with the criticism advanced by Father Beglan in your issue for March 26.

Father Beglan, seeing an element of truth in Dr. Pegis' remarks and yet on the whole disagreeing, has, like a good logician, countered with an apt distinction. Teaching philosophy to undergraduates, Father Beglan would have us note, is a very different story from teaching in the graduate school. Only in the latter is the student "fitted to explore the unitary but complex field of philosophy as such." The undergraduate teacher "must departmentalize his teaching, from logic through natural theology, if he has any hope of clearness of concepts among his students."

Granted the appropriateness of the distinction, the question arises: How far is this departmentalizing to go? Shall we consider ourselves justified, for example, in formularizing and skeletonizing the living thought of a great philosopher like Saint Thomas until it gives the appearance of an anatomist's chart—ordered and stiff and sterile? Shall it be considered good principle to have undergraduate students spend a full two years in the study of Scholastic philosophy, without once having to read a paragraph of Saint Thomas? Are even our oldest and most experienced teachers, at all times and in all ways, better fitted to expound the eternal truths of a Catholic philosophy than the Angelic Doctor himself? Or could it not perhaps be true that the

*Summa Theologica* of Saint Thomas was written for novices?

And when we invoke the principle of *divide et impera*, should not the thought give us pause that the very division of philosophy in vogue in many of our Catholic colleges today finds no basis in the writings of *any* of the great Scholastic authors? I refer, of course, to the division of philosophy proper into general and special metaphysics, introduced by Christian Wolff, the eighteenth-century German rationalist and inspirer of Immanuel Kant, a division quite completely at variance with the Aristotelian and Thomistic conception of the hierarchy of the sciences according to the three degrees of abstraction. It is precisely because we have departmentalized badly, in function of Wolfian misconceptions, that we have left ourselves open to Dr. Pegis' charge of having lost sight of the true nature, unity and independence of philosophical knowledge. It is not simply a question of a method of teaching, therefore, but a question of principle as well and of truth. Surely Father Beglan would not have a different kind of *truth* taught respectively in the undergraduate and graduate schools of philosophy.

Dr. Pegis maintains that we have made the error of attempting to validate metaphysical principles by scientific techniques, a charge which is amply sustained by even a cursory examination of any of a dozen manuals of cosmology or psychology which I have seen. Are we, therefore, to justify the teaching as philosophy of what is not philosophy on the plea of giving "clearer concepts" to our students? Clearer concepts of what (we might ask)? Certainly not of philosophy, if the principle of identity is still an acceptable principle among Scholastic philosophers.

Brooklyn, N. Y.

RAYMOND J. MCCALL

## DISAGREEMENT

EDITOR: I sincerely hope that Father Beglan's comment does not represent the opinion of any considerable number.

For issue is taken with Dr. Pegis mainly on the point of pedagogical technique; whereas the burden of the greater part of his article was to show something far more radical and consequential—the necessity, namely, of a re-evaluation, of a redefinition of philosophy itself. The present discussion is concerned primarily with the manner in which we ourselves are to look upon philosophy, not merely with how we are to teach it. Therefore to adduce as evidence against the case at hand the fact that *some* good teaching is being done, seems a bit irrelevant. Granted that such teaching is all that it is claimed to be, where is the evidence that there has been produced even a few outstanding thinkers here in America? Are men leaving their courses in philosophy the possessors of rich, productive *concepts*, or with mere sterile verbalism?

Nor does it seem very telling to call our attention to the fact that every Catholic teacher of philosophy realizes that philosophy should hold an auton-

omous position. Such a statement seems rather to be an indictment of those it is intended to vindicate. If they do possess such a realization, then why do they write and talk as they do?

Dr. Pegis should really feel complimented by his critic. The fact that such undue attention was given to his lack of senility rather implies that further deficiencies and indictments could not be found in his ideas.

New York, N. Y.

INTERESTED

## STRATEGISTS WANTED

EDITOR: J. Edgar Westfield's coup for Catholic leadership against Communism was excellent. I wish there were more of the championing variety with him. He is entirely right in saying "the Church and the State in America will soon have a fight on their hands that will require full-time strategists and field leaders." The next question, which naturally follows, is: Where will they get full-time strategists and field leaders? Surely they will not pick them out of the air, nor will a genius be dropped into their laps. The Communists are subtle strategists warping the people's minds with brazen effrontery into seeing their ways.

We all know that these poor, deluded people would not think twice of joining the Communistic ranks if they were acquainted with Catholic truths. Or even if they would not listen to our doctrines, let them be confronted with bare facts and they would shun Communistic society. But who will undertake to do this? Communism is so full of loopholes that even a well-educated high-school orator could terrorize and confound a Communist in a debate.

Couldn't we let each priest in his parish conduct a miniature crusade against this impending evil? Couldn't we have public debates between colleges and high schools, merely to let the public know that Communism is not what they want? If this was accomplished, I believe that the Red plague would die a swift, natural death.

Dayton, Ohio

BRIAN McLAUGHLIN

## SCHOLARSHIPS

EDITOR: Through a \$25,000 grant of the Charles Hayden Foundation, \$15,000 is immediately available for one-year scholarships in any department of Fordham University. Many will be renewed, and for this purpose \$10,000 is held in reserve, but no promises of renewal of scholarships will be made at this time.

The awards, which may vary from \$50 to \$1,000, are open to young men living in Boston or in the Metropolitan area of New York who give promise of conspicuous leadership and are unable to finance their higher education. All inquiries should be directed to the Fordham Hayden Scholarship Committee. Applications will be received until May 1st.

New York, N. Y.

ROBERT I. GANNON, S.J.

President, Fordham University



# LITERATURE AND ARTS

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## BEHOLD THE POETS! TO WHAT DEPTHS THEY FALL!

DAVID GORDON

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THE department of *belles lettres* classified in the texts as "Bad Poetry" is the most venerable and firmly established in literature and it surpasses all the other kinds of literature in quantity.

The most perfect example of this *genre* known to the critics is to be found on the back fence of a saloon on Ninth Avenue, New York City, reading

Susie loves  
Wilbert.

However the execrable muse confines herself not alone to the thesis Catullan. Patriotism comes within its purview, as also theology, with side excursions into the more esoteric pornographies. Nowhere do we find it in its archetypal, its pristine, its quintessential badness, its pure and inspiring quiddity; except perhaps in that masterpiece of the unsung London bard who executed the strophe:

I put my hat upon my head  
And walked into The Strand  
And there I met another man  
Whose hat was in his hand.

The beauty of this composition lies specifically in the fact that it has no reason for existence—that it would be far better had it never been at all.

But we do not often get actually solid gold nor entirely sterling silver, the metallic counterparts of this last example of verse making. The Surrealists justly complain that it is the bane of the arts to load themselves with that foreign accretion: The Subject. But what would you? Which of us has the dictional audacity to monstrate, before the astonished and admiring eyes of Park Avenue society ladies, exquisite combinations of words which are words only, signifying nothing? Miss Stein is properly rewarded for her high and holy genius. The more stylish and Marxian of the critics have been sure that she has some obscure and eleusinian message relating to the rights of the proletariat concealed among her dodderings. Her true apostles, however, the uncompromising art-for-art's-sakers defend Miss Stein: they will shed their blood to prove that Gertrude Stein has nothing to say at all. The defenders need not be so eager. Miss Stein, like her racial predecessors, the Pharisees, "has her reward." On this earth, she lies firmly embedded in

the hearts of the denizens of the Social Register. As for posterity—Gertrude Stein is so individual and unreduplicable that she will beyond doubt go ringing down the pages of future literary history as the Bedlamite Muse.

Thus she will take a place in the annals of American bardics somewhere between Miss Sigourney, the Sweet Singer of Michigan, and Ella Wheeler Wilcox of Wisconsin, also a great defender of "Art."

Such feminine geniuses as Miss Stein, Miss Wilcox, Miss Sigourney and others from other States of the Union (Miss Stein represents Maryland) have given the lie once for all to the contention that poesy is a masculine muse. We cannot, of course, include Miss Millay with the above relicts of the Sapphic tradition. Miss Millay *does* have a high and expert capability with English metrics. It is only her theme that is the theme imperative of the post-war age: the uselessness of life and the innocence of Sacco-Vanzetti and all Communists.

Let us, however, go back to lady poets of an older and sweeter generation. There was the eight-year-old daughter of the Anglican clergyman who, in the year 1822, in a burst of devotional frenzy, wrote

Praise for tea and buttered toast  
Father, Son and Holy Ghost

and the lady poetess who, at about the same period, composed *Louisa, a Poetical Novel in Four Episodes*. This latter was greatly admired by the subjects of King William IV, a race much more addicted to poetry *qua* poetry than we. Christopher North was so moved with enthusiasm for Louisa that he deduced from the beauty of the Protestant moral sentiments expressed in the poem the physical pulchritude of the authoress. "No ugly woman," thundered North, "ever wrote a beautiful poem!"

In our own day we deduce not the physical beauty but the moral grandeur of any author who inveighs against vice in strophes, no matter how inept. The vice of our day is not at all moral leperism (it's a virtue today) but Capitalism. A refined cynicism, an arch and good-humored sexiness and—withal—a high-tone and snooty Marxian orthodoxy will make you an author for *Esquire*. The

Ashkenazic impresarios of our "smart" magazines specialize in verse (and prose) which can by no means be called bad in form. The only thing bad about this literature is its morals.

Let us, however, leave the present age and write of the classics for posterity. The classic writers have been fond of working in this exquisite medium of Bad Poetry. Think of the yards of grandly wretched verse composed by Wordsworth and Browning. One almost regrets that these two men composed some of the most magnificent poems in English. Their expertism in unadulterated badness—when they chose badness rather than genius—is in itself a form of genius. And, let us not forget that, in the case of Wordsworth and Browning (and perhaps Coleridge too), mere badness accounts for the great majority of their output. Shall quantity count for nothing?

Pierpont Moscowitz, Ph.D., in his doctoral thesis published by the University of Yukon Press cites 78% as the quotient for Browning, and 91-5/6% as the quotient for Wordsworth. Over and above these percentages, the residue is great and heavenly poetry. But why judge Browning and Wordsworth on a *qualitative* basis in this *quantitative* Age?

The right way (ask any Marxian analyst) to judge a poet or a society or an institution is by dissecting it. V. F. Calverton wrote a whole book on *The Bankruptcy of Marriage* where he proved his thesis to the hilt, *statistically*. According to this, if your marriage is not bankrupt it should be.

Now we are getting somewhere. By statistical mensuration, Wordsworth's grand and God-smitten sonnets should be classified as "lou-say"—because most of Wordsworth's sonnets are indubitably bad. If you do not believe me, try the sonnets to the River Duddon. We wonder how Wordsworth himself felt about the Duddon sonnets. That grand critic and really great poet, old Sam Johnson said: "Perhaps no man ever thought a line superfluous when he wrote it. We are seldom tiresome to ourselves."

The truth of the matter is that the ages when much bad poetry is produced are the great ages of poetry. The years that gave a grudging reception to the young Wordsworth received with much more warmth the naturalist-poet Grainger. Grainger was a physician who had been to Jamaica and, upon returning to England, without any provocation whatever, produced a thick volume of verse entitled *Sugar Cane*, from which we quote:

Mosquitos, sand-flies, seek the sheltered roof  
And with fell rage the stranger guest assail,  
Nor spare the sportive child; from their retreats  
Cockroaches crawl displeasingly abroad.

The intentions of Mr. Grainger for the world's betterment were undoubtedly more authentic than those of W. H. Auden. But, we suppose, Mr. Auden is to be preferred technically.

In Cromwell's day, Praise-God Barebones put coals of fire on his head and ran through the streets of London crying, in perfect iambs,

Repent  
Repent!

into the unfeeling ears of the Anglicans. Today,

Mr. Auden, in deliberately distorted iambs, cries

Reform  
Reform!

into the ears of modern Anglicans. The Second Coming has not yet arrived in England to satisfy the descendants of Barebones. As to the dictatorship of the proletariat, subject of Mr. Auden's hymnary, you are not permitted to doubt. It is orthodox Marxism that Marxism is inevitable at a certain point in capitalist evolution. Mr. Auden, a thorough-going follower of Stalin, is perfectly content to chop off the heads of all who deny any of the articles of the Marxian Creed, of which Inevitability is Number 32. Why take a chance? Mr. Auden may yet be the Marxist Dictator for the English-speaking countries. In times of stress such things happen. Robespierre came to the Dictatorship of Revolutionary France fresh from the composition of bales of classic verses celebrating Rousseau's Natural Virtue of Man.

Mr. Ernest Hemingway who writes no poetry at all (he's too much of a He-man) is already muttering dark threats against the Republicans. And the author of this essay (unbelievable!) voted for Hoover.

## GERARD GROOTE, EDUCATOR

RECENT research into the life and work of Gerard Groote, with the discovery of a manuscript that was clearly written previous to the year 1400, fixes the authorship of the *Following of Christ* on him. Apart from the Sacred Scriptures no book or writing has had such universal appeal nor been so widely printed and read as this golden treasury of the spiritual life. To Gerard Groote, the master of ascetics, saints and spiritual writers and directors of souls are most profoundly indebted.

But deeply as we are in debt to Gerard Groote for his inestimable contribution to asceticism, the world at large owes him, not a greater, but a yet wider intellectual debt. About the year 1375 he founded an association of priests and laymen at Deventer, known as the Brethren of the Common Life, whose primary work was the education of youth. So great was the success of the organization that within a comparatively short time their schools were scattered over forty-five principal centers of Europe and numbered over 30,000 pupils.

Names such as John Wessel, Rudolf Agricola (Huysmann), Alexander Hegius, John Reuchlin and Desiderius Erasmus are household words among modern educators. Their achievements for the progress of education, particularly those of Reuchlin and Erasmus, are given notable play by historians of pedagogy. Yet they were all either members of the Brethren or educated by them.

Unfortunately it has been almost forgotten that the impetus to the spread of humanism and the advancement of education to all classes is directly attributable to the guiding genius of the Brethren, who in his day was accounted without equal in wisdom and scope of knowledge. To Gerard Groote, educator, scholars too must pay tribute. A. W.



# BOOKS

## LEADER IN THE MEDICAL WORLD

J. B. MURPHY: STORMY PETREL OF SURGERY. By Loyal Davis, M.D. G. P. Putnam's Sons. \$3

DR. DAVIS is the eighth Professor of Surgery at the Northwestern University Medical School, and "J. B.," the subject of this biography, was the fourth. A previous paper on Dr. Murphy by the same author appeared in 1934, in the *Journal of Surgery, Gynaecology and Obstetrics*. This magazine's first publication was due to Dr. Murphy's efforts, and so it has fostered other accounts of him from time to time, notably one in 1931 by Prof. G. Grey Turner of Newcastle-upon-Tyne, England, and one in 1933 by Sir William I. de Courcey Wheeler of Dublin, Ireland. These contain many interesting anecdotes about Murphy, which are not included in this biography. But even without them, the author has given a fascinating story of probably the most colorful figure American medicine has yet produced.

Murphy was born of Irish immigrant parents, who started life anew in the young mid-West of the American continent, without anything but splendid physical and spiritual equipment. His father was Michael Murphy, and his mother, Ann Grimes. Of their five children, one of the two daughters became a nun, the other made a romantic marriage. Of the sons, one became a Chicago pharmacist, another a Montreal priest, and the third is the hero of this tale. As is so often the case, young Murphy owed a great deal to his mother's wise counsels and abundant self-sacrifice. She felt amply rewarded however, when on November 25, 1885, dressed in a new black silk dress, she saw her son married to a charming and wealthy girl, named Plamondon, with another son as best man, and the other as the officiating clergyman.

Then began for Dr. Murphy a career that constantly expanded through the medical world of Chicago until the whole country was talking about him and his exploits. He was an indefatigable worker, and his practice grew by leaps and bounds. As his success increased, so also spread a whispering campaign of slander against him. His work was seriously compromised often by the smallness and meanness of many of that profession which exists to heal the wounds in men's bodies, but apparently does not hesitate to inflict dire wounds on their souls. It is almost incredible, until one recalls what prejudice can accomplish, that doctors, learned and skillful and devoted to their patients, should out of envy and jealousy attack so bitterly one of their fellow-practitioners, merely because he was endeavoring to do for humanity more than they were able to do themselves. But the facts show how much of what the surgical world knows today was taught by Dr. Murphy. He was among the first to develop the surgery of the appendix, suture of blood vessels, surgery of the lungs, of the joints, and of the intestinal tract—including the perfection of the button which bears his name.

Murphy's most spectacular case was that of Theodore Roosevelt, when the latter was shot in Milwaukee in October, 1912, just as he was leaving his hotel to fill a speaking engagement. He insisted on driving to the auditorium, and began his speech: "I am going to ask you to be quiet, and please excuse me from making a long speech, for there's a bullet in my body." As soon as he finished, he was rushed to the hospital, where he was examined by four doctors, among them Dr. Joseph Bloodgood of Johns Hopkins. They urged him to go to Chicago, so that Dr. Murphy might perform the operation required to save his life. It was naturally an event of great anxiety for everybody, and though Dr. Murphy

tried to spare the sensitive feelings of all concerned, even the successful outcome of the operation did not save him from the venom of his calumniators, who brought him to trial before the American Medical Association on charges of stealing the patient and deliberately seeking notoriety.

After battling occasionally in his own body with *angina pectoris* for some years, the end was dramatic. "Well, Mac," J. B. said quietly to his friend and attending physician, Dr. McArthur, "I'm sure the end is here." "Why, Murphy, that doesn't sound like you." "Mac, we've known each other too long to have you beat around the bush with me. I know that this is all there is." He insisted that his friend help him to his feet, and with the other's assistance, managed to walk a few steps to his wife's room. As she came forward to meet him, he fell dead at her feet.

FRANCIS J. DORE, S.J., M.D.

## A GREAT POPE IN A TRYING AGE

POPE PIUS THE ELEVENTH. By Philip Hughes. Sheed and Ward. \$3

HAVING in mind the infelicitous attempt, or we might say attempts, made recently on the subject, one puts down this book with a feeling of gratitude to Father Hughes for taking time from his *History of the Church* to give us a reliable, authoritative account of a great Pope which cannot help shattering the errors, misconceptions, innuendos, court gossip and wishful thinking associated with a recent book. Whether the author intended it or not, he could not have accomplished this more successfully than has been done in *Pope Pius the Eleventh*. Therein without any reference to the other work, Father Hughes answers the attacks and implications, not by "it is said" or "one says," but by reference to Pontifical documents and actions.

A great amount of European history, especially Central Europe of the war and post-war years, is incorporated into the book. In fact the value of the work on this head is beyond exaggeration. The chapter on Poland is particularly replete with facts and interest, bearing on those hectic years when Poland's fate swung precariously in the balance between Germany and Russia, with Allied countries hoping for little, while expecting the worst. The Lateran Treaties and their aftermath are handled with scholarly precision, painstaking care, interspersed with judicious comment.

The Holy Father's attitude on the Ethiopian affair is sketched in a spirit of reasonableness and realism and this, even though it may not meet the views of all Catholics. The Pontifical documents, especially the three more important and longer ones on Education, Marriage and Social Reconstruction, are given a thorough examination and satisfactory explanation. The dealings of the Holy See, the difficulties encountered, and measures taken in France, Mexico, Germany and Spain receive attention in the last chapter.

It was fortunate that this sketch of a great Pope—according to the author, coupled with Leo XIII the most notable since Innocent XI—fell to such a scholarly pen as that of Father Hughes. The work, in which not a line is wasted, will provide a useful index to the present Holy Father's achievements and contemporaneous problems, while it will remain authoritative and complete as a biography until lapse of time permits a fuller use of documents and the intervening years afford a more adequate perspective.

WILLIAM J. BENN

## THE LATE FRENCH PREMIER

LEON BLUM, MAN AND STATESMAN. By Geoffrey Fraser and Thadée Natanson. J. B. Lippincott Co. \$3

THE sub-subtitle calls this book "the only authorized biography"; certainly a naïve admission which must put all critical minds on the alert. For authorization of this stamp spells restrictive partisanship, and restrictive partisanship spells propaganda, and propaganda is only sectarian opinion which must be sown broadcast. On page 281 we read the ingenuous statement: "Enough time has not elapsed to give the would-be historian the necessary distance for important judgment. . . . 'Secret' history must be kept." For the present maybe, yes.

Léon Blum, the man, it so seems, is a veritable catcradle of dualities which, of course, do not disharmonize, but neatly blend, compose and confirm. "Jew and Frenchman, feminine sensibility, and masculine logic, bourgeois in traditions and proletarian in sympathies." M. Blum is ever upright, honest, noble, never a quitter. We are invited to view a solidly substantial Dr. Jekyll and an inconsequentially shadowy Mr. Hyde. Official portraiture, and a bit too thick!

Also M. Blum emerges from the pages as the peerless statesman standing solemnly erect before the world and his opponents, unafraid, the *droits d'homme* opened ceremoniously under his righteous right hand. Yet to gain some understanding of his immediate background, the so-called Popular Front, we are forced mentally to squint. Here is a political policy "he did not invent," so say the authors. We wonder who did discover this professionally political maneuver. "No one—it sprang out of the political instinct of a people that had 150 years of democratic tradition," answer the biographers. And the same is true of Spain with its *Frente Popular*, we are left to easily infer. As a matter of fact the Communist Party and the trade union confederations of France have their orders directly from Moscow and accordingly they slyly remain outside the coalition Cabinet in order to confuse it and so control it. The tail is wagging the dog.

Léon Blum seems to fit the description of that strangely modern species, the "revolutionary simpleton" or more accurately the democratic revolutionary. M. Blum although an intellectual and an esthete soaked in bourgeois ways, means and conditions, nevertheless professes profound proletarian sympathies in his activist politics. Has he forgotten the history of the Revolution, the *Grande Peur* and the *Terreur*? The democratic revolution like Chronos devours its own children. M. Blum looks dangerously like a French Kerensky.

JOSEPH P. SHANAHAN

## BOOKS IN BRIEFER REVIEW

LOOKING BEHIND THE CENSORSHIPS. By Eugene J. Young. J. B. Lippincott Co. \$3

CENSORSHIP, visible or invisible, suppresses, distorts and colors most of the news we read. Mr. Young is a veteran journalist long connected with the old New York World. Since 1931 he has been cable editor of the New York Times. In his very frank and stimulating book Mr. Young discusses international affairs as presented to us through "censorship." British, French, Italian, German, Spanish, Russian and American policies are summarized and analyzed with lucidity.

Mr. Young is convinced that Dimitrov and the Komin-tern precipitated the chaos in Spain which led to the civil war. He regards the common front in Spain, France and elsewhere as a smoke screen behind which the Kremlin seeks to promote Russian interests, and, if pos-

sible, world revolution. He also thinks that the Italian monarchy will reap the final fruit of Il Duce's activity. Space forbids any detailed comment on other topics handled in this stimulating book.

It will be of real aid to teachers and students striving to follow the complicated game of international politics. It is realistic almost to the point of genial cynicism. Eden's idealism was primarily motivated by a desire to protect the Empire, the realism of Chamberlain and Halifax has the same motive. Only a profound psychological change in statesmen and nations and a real economic adjustment giving to under-privileged peoples access to vital raw materials can check the drift to Armageddon.

LAURENCE KENT PATTERSON

THE SUMMING UP. By W. Somerset Maugham. Doubleday Doran. \$2.50

IF Mr. Maugham had confined the summing up of his views to artistic matters, this book might have come in for rather enthusiastic recommendation, for he writes ingenuously and with ease and admires the right masters. Moreover, everyone is curious as to how an author works: watching the literary wheels go round proves a fascinating occupation, especially when the author has been successful and has made a lot of money by writing. But when it comes to views on life—and the last quarter of the book is full of them—Mr. Maugham is talking pretty much through his hat. He suffers from a defect common to most self-educated men, he is quite sure of himself. Catholic readers will see where he goes astray, and pity rather than condemn. PAULA KURTH

THREE WOMEN. By Hazel Hawthorne. E. P. Dutton and Co. \$2.50

THREE little Cape Cod girls grow to womanhood in the rather bleak surroundings of a school-master's house, a parsonage and a fisherman's shanty. They share a few experiences as children, but their characters are too disparate for friendship. As the Civil War breaks out, they emerge from girlhood and the record of their romantic strivings forms one of the nastiest stories I have ever read. It is sordid, lustful, and mean beyond words. There is not a smile in the book, not a note of optimism. The author presents us with a series of hatreds, unnatural passions and stillborn hopes, that cannot even be labeled sensual. They are just dull and purposelessly dirty.

R. J. McINNIS

FAREWELL 'TOINETTE: A FOOTNOTE TO HISTORY. By Bertita Harding. The Bobbs-Merrill Co. \$2.50

'TOINETTE is, of course, Marie Antoinette. Christened Maria Antonia, she was the daughter of Maria Theresa, the Hapsburg Empress of Austria and at the age of ten, she was betrothed to the then Dauphin, the eldest grandson of Louis XV. At the age of fourteen, poor little 'Toinette was married by proxy and started on her journey to Versailles and her unseen husband. On the journey, she was accompanied by her oldest brother Joseph, the Emperor in name but not in fact, as their mother still wielded the power.

This is the historical setting of the book; these are the historical events which are touched upon. Enter the romance. Duke Karl of Swabia sent an invitation to Joseph and the little Archduchess and to the whole royal suite to accept on their journey through his land, the hospitality of the castle. Joseph replied for all and said that they would stop at an inn of the town. Lest this happen, Duke Karl ordered all the inns of the towns to be closed and converted his own castle into the only hostelry with himself disguised as proprietor and with his goodly wife, the Duchess, playing the rôle of chatelaine and housekeeper. Of course comedy ensues, with little 'Toinette in the background, very sleepy and very sad because no one has ever given her a little pug dog.

The book is very light in tone and content. Gentle satire of royalty runs throughout; there is occasional satire, too, of the clergy which might be offensive did not a sense of the absurd prevent our finding insult where likely none was intended.

A. J. SHEEHAN



# ART

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FOR many years one of the constant reproaches against our governments in this country, both State and Federal, has been that they have not acted as patrons of the fine arts in any consistent or intelligent fashion. One recalls, at the very beginning of the Federal Government's life, the rebuffs suffered by Trumbull in his attempt to place at the service of the Congress the likenesses which he had made from life of revolutionary leaders. The fate of l'Enfant's plan for the national capitol is notorious. All through the nineteenth century Government employment of artists was not only rare, but also lacking in good judgment; only in the adornment of a few state capitol and municipal edifices erected toward the end of the century were first-rate men employed.

At the turn of the century a change began to make itself apparent, largely under the leadership of such architectural firms as McKim, Mead and White; artists of distinction began to find public employment, although those employed were distinctly of the academic, *beaux arts* variety. This general state of affairs continued until the organization of the WPA, although a few non-academic works were commissioned in connection with the grandiose building projects which were instituted under the Coolidge and Hoover administrations. These projects involved a great deal of decoration painting and sculpture, but even when this work was given to men of mildly modern tendency, these men were still principally of the "old guard" of contemporary American art, trained in the tradition of the Paris *Beaux Arts*.

It is to be doubted whether the denizens of Washington Square were themselves desirous of working for the state at that time. In the prosperous days before the depression there was something a little fashionable in being continuously "broke." But when everyone became "broke," when it became increasingly difficult to exist from hand to mouth, and when the miserable bourgeoisie began to cease to perform one of its most important functions, that of buying works of art, a revolution in sentiment soon manifested itself. The artistic community, which in modern western civilization is always more on the radical than the conservative side in politics, began to embrace Marxism and to become terribly aware of the "Social Problem."

General unemployment had its effect upon artists fully as much if not more than it had upon all workers. Those who had earned their living doing commercial work found that the art department is one of the first which callous business men consider superfluous.

The problem of the unemployed and often literally starving artist had to be faced, just as did hundreds of other problems of unemployment, and some relief became imperative. The result was the Federal Art Projects of the WPA. These were intended to relieve the terrible pressure of the depression upon creative artists by paying them to do the work for which they were trained—largely the creation of easel paintings and their equivalent in sculpture. As a temporary measure this was essential and sensible. But it is now proposed to make Uncle Sam a permanent patron of the arts. The Government is to perpetuate the WPA art projects, and we can see in prospect that heavenly state of affairs for the artist in which he is paid to do what he wants to do.

There is no question but that the past record of our administrations as patrons of art is sad; there is room in the future for great improvement, and the general tax-paying public should be a patron for the artist. But this is a far cry from acting as fairy godmother to a lot of untalented escapists who get self-satisfaction from smearing paint on canvas. And it is against this that we must be on guard, for that is precisely at what the official artists' groups would seem to be aiming in the legislation before Congress.

HARRY LORIN BINSSE

# THEATRE

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THE SEA GULL. Exactly why the Lunts revived *The Sea Gull* this Spring nobody but the Lunts knows. We have had many recent revivals of depressing classics, and most of them have failed. The Lunts know that, too. They also know, for they are both artists with ears close to the ground, that what the public needs just now is not powerful studies of frustration and sick souls, but something that uplifts and helps one along the human way. We have only to look around us to see disappointment, disillusionment and despair. Many, turning their eyes inward, will also see them there. Most human beings nowadays do not want to follow those things at the theatre in their hours of recreation. Nevertheless, they are getting them; and as they take them these nights the Shubert theatre is full of the whispered voices of spectators asking one another *why?*

Having said in the beginning that no one knows the answer but the Lunts, I shall make a guess at it. There are two plausible reasons. The first is that Alfred Lunt and Lynn Fontanne desired to play the two leading roles in *The Sea Gull*. Most stars do, at one time or another. The second, and perhaps the more vital to them, is that they also desired a short engagement in their new Spring offering. It must be something that would not drag on into the hot weather and keep them in town. No matter how well they acted in the Chekhov play—and it may be said here and now that they are acting superbly—its run would inevitably be short. They were right about that, too. Their passage for Europe has been engaged for May 11.

Having thus gone into the whys and wherefores of the revival it is only fair to add that the Theatre Guild's presentation of the Russian soul-operation is magnificently set, directed and acted throughout. Those who like to see men and women incessantly tear themselves up by the roots to study their own misery will have a grand time observing Miss Fontanne, magnificently unrecognizable in a red wig, Mr. Lunt, equally so in impressive beard and pantaloons, and Miss Uta Hagen as the *Sea Gull* whose life he destroys. Miss Hagen, by the way, is a new-comer to New York, and her work is delicate, subtle and altogether charming. Personally I have not much use for cumulative and in-growing self-pity—even when it is expressed with such consummate art as in this production. But theatregoers who enjoy it will find it represented at the Shubert to the last turn of the artistic screw.

SCHOOLHOUSE ON THE LOT. The real lives of most moving-picture children are not much gayer than those of the self-pitying soul-searchers. Their childhood is over almost before they know they are children. They are brought up in dramatic hot-houses where they mature almost over-night. But *Schoolhouse on the Lot*, though it gives them a bedlam setting, makes them amusing to the by-standers.

The farce, written by Joseph A. Field and Jerome Chodorov, and presented by Philip Dunning at the Ritz Theatre, is played with such desperate energy and rush that it occasionally leaves one breathless. Its plot is lost in the stampede before the end of the first act. But it has its humor and its big moments, and it offers us a new actor, Robert Harris, who is well worth following now and later. An item to remember is that the Schoolhouse is an institution of learning for moving-picture children and that it is "on the lot" so that they may be near their cinema work. With that clear in one's mind one can forget the plot and have a pretty good time—especially during the scene in which the most spoiled child-star of the settlement is efficiently spanked. That episode sends the audience out into Broadway feeling quite gay.

ELIZABETH JORDAN

## FILMS

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**THE RETURN OF THE SCARLET PIMPERNEL.** Baroness Orczy's versatile Sir Percy Blakeney, who conceals the daring spirit of the Scarlet Pimpernel under the exterior of a Regency fop, rides again in a sometimes exciting, always implausible adventure. Directed in a kind of galloping pace by Hans Schwartz, the film emphasizes action at the expense of adequate character portrayal and motivation. A threat to the safety of his French-born wife combines with his humanitarian instincts to draw Sir Percy once again into the shadow of The Terror in an attempt to rescue some innocents of the French Revolution. With a great deal of mechanical assistance in the way of disguises which are deceptive only by permission of the scenarist, spies and reckless forays, he manages to outwit the minions of the murderous Robespierre for a restful conclusion. The character of Sir Percy is merely adumbrated in the hands of Barry Barnes and lacks the humor and reserve of charm which marked his initial impersonation. Francis Lister is excellent as the crafty French agent and Sophie Stewart, Anthony Bushell, Margaretta Scott and James Mason are in support. Alexander Korda has not matched the graces of the Pimpernel's first exploit in the matter of production, either, but as a costumed melodrama general audiences will find it moderately diverting. (*United Artists*)

**WOMEN ARE LIKE THAT.** This is the latest of an interminable line of domestic dramas featuring Kay Francis' wardrobe and demonstrating a settled conviction of the truth of Ambrose Bierce's definition of a bride as a woman with a fine prospect of happiness behind her. It has long seemed a legitimate question whether Miss Francis' heroines suffer more than their audiences from the apparently ceaseless perils of the married state. In the present instance, she is forced to take up a man's burden in an advertising agency threatened by her father's embezzlement and deserted by her husband for the cheering cup. Using a feminine approach, she stabilizes the business only to have her husband reform, join a competitor and force her back into woman's proverbial place. It ends, happily. Miss Francis gives the brave and glittering performance which we have come to know too well and Pat O'Brien brings the piece into relation with real life now and again with masculine straightforwardness. (*Warner*)

**SAILING ALONG.** The familiar musical comedy combination of light music and even lighter plot returns Jessie Matthews to American audiences in a lively and enjoyable picture. A note of startling originality is struck, whether in the interest of taste or economy does not matter, by the omission of those gargantuan production numbers with which the humblest of Hollywood opera are cluttered. Miss Matthews once again is a talented unknown who rises from poverty to sudden theatrical success in London, all, as it turns out, for the privilege of renouncing fame and fortune for true love. The star sings and dances with amiable grace and is ably assisted by Jack Whiting. Roland Young sets the humor of the film and adds measurably to the merits of an adult entertainment. (*Gaumont-British*)

**THE LONE WOLF IN PARIS.** That polished man of the world, and not infrequently of the underworld, Michael Lanyard, turns up opportunely to foil the international jewel thieves in a minor mystery thriller. Francis Lederer portrays Lanyard with undiminished suavity in an adventure located in a mythical kingdom and involving a revolutionary plot. The film is leisurely and should provide pleasant moments for the entire family. (*Columbia*)

THOMAS J. FITZMORRIS

## EVENTS

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The medical profession is constantly discovering new and startling effects produced on human mind and body by varying environments. An environment filled with exploding, high-powered shells, produces a reaction known as shell-shock, as was clearly shown by the late World War. Researchers announced last week that temperature changes, especially in the Spring and Fall, increase blood pressure to an extent hitherto unsuspected. These are only two examples of the way science is encouraging mankind by its discovery of new diseases. . . . Like the World War, AMERICA'S Bias Contest has brought to light a new malady, one that will undoubtedly prove of profound interest to scientists. This new malady was just discovered last week. Sufferers at first did not know what was ailing them. Only gradually did they find out the cause of their perturbation. . . . The judges of the Bias Contest, standing waist-deep in clippings for days at a time, began to notice a peculiar jitteriness coming over them. For a while they thought it was caused by something they ate. This, however, was ruled out. Little by little, the judges began to see the light. It was the new environment, an environment to which human nature had never before been exposed, which brought about the subtle changes in the judges' make-up. Just as an environment filled with exploding shells produces shell-shock, an environment filled with clippings produces *clippophobia*, the Bias Contest showed. Full knowledge of the new malady is, of course, not now at hand, but some little information is already compiled. If an ordinarily healthy individual stands with a sea of clippings coming up to his waist, it will take about two days before *clippophobia* completely seizes him. If he is taken out before two days, he has a chance of recovery. He must, however, be kept in a dark, quiet room, where he cannot see a clipping or hear any noises that sound like the crackle of clippings. He should not be allowed to see even the smallest clipping for about a month. After that, the doctor is advised to let him catch a fleeting glimpse of one or two diminutive clippings every third day, but not to show him a newspaper or magazine for at least six months. . . . If, however, the individual is standing with clippings heaped up to his chin, as was the case with one of the judges, he is seized with *clippophobia* within a few hours, and there is very little can be done for him, at least in the present state of scientific knowledge. . . . The malady works in a strange way. One affected with *clippophobia* may appear perfectly normal. If a friend speaks to him, he will seem to be all right, but if the friend should pull a clipping out of a pocket, the victim will flee in terror. . . . A heap of clippings fills one suffering with *Clippophobia* with horror. After such a sight he is depressed for weeks. As the wind rustles through the trees, the leaves begin to crackle. To the victim such a sound is very similar to that made by the clippings when he walked through them during the Bias Contest. He becomes unnerved. . . . Victims must be kept far away from trees. When moving through city streets, they must wear dark glasses so that newsstands become blurred in their sight. They should have cotton in their ears, so that the voices of newsboys become inaudible to them. Anything even remotely suggesting clippings, newspapers or magazines must be excluded from their environment. . . .

It is unfortunate that the dire effects following exposure to huge masses of clippings was not known before the Bias Contest started. Safeguards could have been thrown around the judges. Unfortunately, just as the danger of working with radium became known too late to save the pioneers, the perils of clipping-exposure was only discovered after the judges had been buried under clippings for days.

THE PARADER